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A Startling Memory Feat That You Can Do

How I learned the secret in one evening. It has helped me every day.

WHEN my old friend Richard Faulkner invited me to a dinner party at his house, I little thought it would be the direct means of doubling my salary in less than two years. Yet it was, and here is the way it all came about.

Towards the end of the evening things began to drag a bit as they often do at parties. Finally someone suggested the old idea of having everyone do a 'party-piece'. Some sang, others forced weird sounds out of the piano, recited, told stories and so on.

Then it came to Peter Brown's turn. He said he had a simple 'trick' which he hoped we would like. First he asked to be blindfolded. Those present were to call out 25 random numbers of three figures each, such as 161, 249, and so on. He asked me to list the numbers in order as they were called.

Peter then astounded everyone by repeating the entire list of 25 numbers backwards and forwards. Then he asked people to request numbers by their position in the list, such as the eighth number called, the fourth number and so on. Instantly he repeated back the correct number in the positions called. He did this with the entire list — over and over again without making a single mistake.

Then Peter asked someone to shuffle a deck of cards and call them out in order. Still blindfolded he instantly named the cards in their order backwards and forwards.

You may well imagine our amazement at Peter's remarkable feat. You naturally expect to see a thing of this sort on television or the stage. Even then you look upon it as a trick. But to see it done by an ordinary businessman, in plain view of everyone, blindfolded and under conditions which make trickery impossible, is astonishing to say the least.

* * * * *

On the way home that evening I asked Peter Brown how it was done. He said there was really nothing to it — simply a memory feat, the key to which anyone could easily learn in one evening. The reason most people have bad memories is because they leave memory development to chance. Anyone could do what he had done and develop a good memory, he said, by following a few simple rules. And then he told me exactly how to do it. At the time, I little thought that evening would prove to be one of the most eventful in my life, but that's what it proved to be.

What Peter said I took to heart. In one evening I made remarkable strides towards improving my memory. In just a few days I learned to do exactly what he had done. At first I amused myself with my new-found ability by amazing people at parties. Everyone was talking about my 'memory feat', and I was showered with invitations to all sorts of occasions. People often asked me how they also could become more popular and successful. I used to tell them to learn my 'memory feat' — but this is apart from what I want to tell you now.

The most gratifying thing about the improvement of my memory was the remarkable way it helped me in business. I discovered that my memory training had literally put a razor edge on my mind. My thinking had become clearer, quicker, keener. I was fast acquiring that mental grasp and alertness I had so often admired in men who were spoken of as "brilliant" and "geniuses".

Then I noticed a marked improvement in my writing and conversational powers. Formerly my writing and talk was halting and disconnected. I could never think of things to say until the conversation was over. But now words and ideas leap into my mind. I never have to search for the right word, the right expression or the right thing to say. Instantly I find myself impressing people with bright, sparkling conversation.

It wasn't long before my new-found ability to remember attracted the attention of our Chairman. Since then my salary has increased dramatically.

I found that my ability to remember helped me tremendously in dealing with other people, particularly in meetings. The man who can back up his statements quickly with a string of definite facts and figures dominates every situation. Now it seems as though I never forget anything. I can instantly recall any fact I want to remember as if it were printed in black and white!

* * * * *

These are only a few of the hundreds of ways I have profited by my trained memory. No longer do I suffer the frustration of meeting people I know and not being able to recall their names. The moment I see someone I have met before a name leaps into my mind, together with a string of personal facts. Now I find it easy to recall everything I read. I can now master a subject in considerably less time than before. Price lists, reports, quotations, data of all kinds. I can recall in detail almost at will. I rarely make a mistake.

What's more, I can now do my day's work quicker and with much less effort than before.

What Peter told me that eventful evening was this: "Send for details of Dr. Bruno Furst's Memory Course." I did. That was my first step in learning to do all the remarkable things I have told you about. In fact, I was so impressed that I got permission to publish Dr. Furst's Course myself.

My advice to you now is don't wait another minute. Full details of Dr. Furst's remarkable Course are available free on request. You will be amazed how a powerful memory can improve your opportunities at work and in your social life. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose by posting the coupon today.

BOB HEAP

* * * * *

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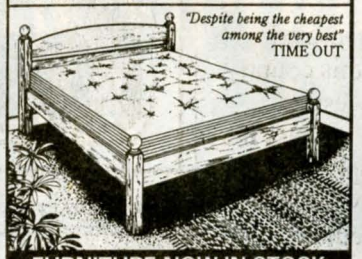

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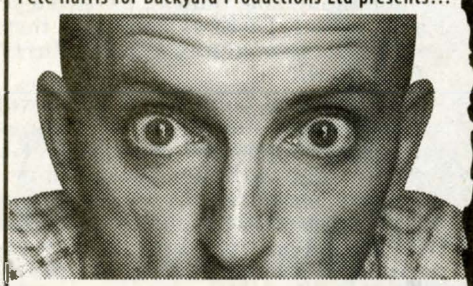

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Wed 15	Sheffield, Sheffield City Hall	0114-278 9789
Thur 16	Hull, Hull City Hall	01482-226655
Fri 17	Derby, Assembly Rooms	01332-255800
Sat 18	Manchester, Manchester Apollo	0161-242 2560
Sun 19	Liverpool, Empire Theatre	0151-709 1555
Wed 22	Preston, The Guild Hall	01772-258858
Thurs 23	Halifax, Victoria Theatre	01422-351158
Fri 24	Wolverhampton, Civic Hall	01902-312030
Sat 25	Canterbury, Marlowe Theatre	01227-787787
Sun 26	High Wycombe, Wycombe Swan	01494-512000
Tue 28	Swansea, Grand Theatre	01792-475715
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Gnome

AFTER the profound sense of national unity that swept this country after the death of the Princess of Wales, it is terribly sad to witness the spectacle of traders attempting to exploit Diana's memory with commemorative coins, medals, t-shirts, stamps, playing cards, keyrings, porcelain figures, china plates, car stickers and even, in one case, a Diana pizza.

What could be more tasteless than these quick-buck merchants producing tacky rubbish and then pretending that they are acting out of genuine sympathy with the late Princess?

That is why we at the Daily Gnome have decided to speak out against these "ghouls" who are quite literally "cashing in on grief".

The Daily Gnome will be mounting a campaign against these cynical rip-off merchants, beginning in today's 94-page "Queen of Hearts" special supplement, following up in tomorrow's 194-page "People's Princess" tribute issue, and then continuing in each of the 294-page editions of the Daily Gnome which we will be producing all this week and next.

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COLOUR SECTION

A GOOD example of British "liberal values" which, according to so many media were greatly in evidence after the death of Princess Diana, was the serial banning of *Private Eye* on the say-so of the censors in the retail trade.

Two retail chains, T&S of Walsall Staffs, which has outlets in the West Midlands and incorporates Gibbs, Paperchain and Dillons (the retail network, not the bookshop); and Alldays, whose headquarters are in Chandlers Ford, Hants, decided as a matter of national policy to ban the sale of the *Eye*'s last issue.

The *Eye*'s managing director David Cash wrote to the buying directors of both chains, Geoff Purdy of T&S and Anthony Howells at Alldays, to ask why the ban had been imposed and which other publications they had similarly banned in the past and in what circumstances.

Mr Murphy replied on 12 September confirming that Alldays had indeed "taken a policy decision" to ban "material we felt inappropriate concerning the fatal car crash of Diana, Princess of Wales". The reasons, he suggested, without listing them, "you will understand". Two other publications, he says, were also banned. These are, he says, the only bans for which he has been responsible in the last 14 months. From Mr Purdy so far no reply.

Even more damaging to the *Eye* was the decision by W.H. Smith outlets in London not to sell the *Eye*. This ban was eventually revoked from Smug's head office but not before thousands of sales had been lost. Smiths, Menzies and the other retail chains followed the craven policy of "leaving to individual store managers" the decision of whether or not to sell the *Eye*. As a result, some self-promoted censors banned the mag outright; some took it off display and sold it surreptitiously; some lied and said the mag had sold out. Thousands more copies were lost. The general devotion to free speech in the retail trade was summed up by a representative of Martins/Lavells who asked the *Eye*'s distributor if the issue had been "cleared with the palace".

● *The* Eye *will be the only publication in the country not to have put on a large increase in sales and not to have made a large amount of money out of Diana's death. There is, you may note, a certain irony here. You can be certain of getting your* Eye *every issue by subscribing — it's only £17 for a whole year (saving you £9 on the newsstand price). The order form is on page 35. The Ed.*

THE newspapers were delighted with their story on 11 September about the brave British patriot who punched the thief who stole a teddy bear which had been left with the message "Diana, we love you" outside St James's Palace.

The *Daily Mirror* carried a picture of Gerry Moorehouse punching tourist Fabio Piras in the face after the Italian was released from Bow Street magistrates court. Mr Moorehouse was quoted as saying: "I did it for Diana".

Other papers suggested that magistrate Lorraine Morgan, who had originally sent Piras to prison for a week, had been overcome by a fit of mercy and had called him back and let him off with a £100 fine. But two facts were missing from all these stories.

1) The sentence of seven days for a minor theft was unlawful. Piras was 20 and could not be sentenced to less than 14 days. This rule was introduced to stop trigger-happy magistrates packing petty young thieves off to prison for minor offences. When she was reminded of the rule, Morgan had to revise her sentence.

2) Mr Moorehouse was in Bow Street court that day because his daughter was up on a charge — of persistent theft. She pleaded guilty, was sent to a rehabilitation centre and will reappear for sentence in December.

WHEN Martin Taylor was appointed head of the government task force to "modernise the tax and benefits system", cabinet ministers set up a chorus of hosannas.

Chancellor Gordon Brown praised his "first rate mind and ability"; and social services secretary Harriet Harman proclaimed that "work is the best form of welfare for people of working age". With Taylor's help, she promised, "we want to tear down the barriers that keep people trapped on benefit".

As a measure of the importance of the challenge, Martin Taylor will be dedicating two whole days a month to the exciting new task force. The rest of the time he will continue as chief executive of Barclays Bank. And how goes work and welfare at the bank? Er, this week 35,000 workers in two unions at Barclays are balloting for strike action against the bank's "modernising" proposal to deprive workers of automatic cost-of-living increases and as a result to impose a wage freeze on 25,000 of them.

The changes will also substantially reduce pensions. As further proof of its commitment to security in old age, Barclays has removed its generous final-salary pension scheme from new staff. In the last ten years, as prodigious evidence that work is the best form of welfare, 21,000 Barclays workers have lost their jobs.

Generously, Taylor works at the treasury for nothing. But equally generously, Barclays has agreed not to deduct a penny from his £820,000 a year salary and bonus (not to mention an extra £116,000 he gets from the "executive share option scheme") to compensate for those two days a month he can't work for the bank because he's working for the government for nothing.

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● *Fayed and the media* *10*
● *Street of Shameless* *7*
● *The People's Letters* *12*
● *Jeff Bernard tribute* *94*

"Fire away"

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

WILL medals be struck to reward patriotic citizens who distinguished themselves after Princess Diana's death, as happened after the Falklands? We do hope so. Here are the *Eye*'s nominations for those whose conduct went well beyond the call of duty.

MOST SELF-RIGHTEOUS TOSH

"Readers of the *Mirror* know that — particularly since she started to rebuild her life two years ago — we have been almost entirely supportive of her...

"The *Mirror* will now work swiftly with the Press Complaints Commission to protect these boys from intrusive paparazzi photography.

"It is what Diana would have wanted us to do...

"The *Mirror* will give Charles every support in the coming years.

"It is what Diana would have wanted us to do."

— Editorial in the *Mirror*, 8 September.

"True, we are all accountable, because we did push Princess Diana too far. We wanted to be there every minute of every day, recording every move she made, every word she uttered... *In the end, Earl Spencer, if we are guilty of any crime, it is because most of us loved her too much.*"

— Derek Jameson, the *Mirror*.

"Let us hope TV bosses join the *Sun* in refusing to use intrusive royal shots."

— Garry Bushell, the *Sun*.

"The fashionable journals of liberal opinion — the very papers which derided Diana in life — are busily exploiting her memory."

— The *Daily Mail*, momentarily forgetting the derision dished out by its own columnists such as Lynda Lee-Potter and Richard Littlejohn.

"*Mail* Leads the Way in Banning Paparazzi Pictures."

— *Daily Mail* headline, 8 September.

"On the day of the Princess's death, the *Daily Telegraph* circulated a memo from the Editor to all staff which read: 'In our coverage of the death of the Princess of Wales, please bear in mind that what we write will be read and remembered by her children.' God knows, we frequently fall short of what we aim at, but we do try, and so do many other newspapers, some national, some provincial. The tabloids do not."

— Editorial in the *Daily Telegraph*, which only three weeks earlier carried on its front page a huge paparazzo picture of Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit on holiday.

"From here on in, this paper has had enough. We will never publish pictures of the young princes William and Harry in private situations again."

— Front-page editorial in the *Independent*, which had never published such pictures anyway.

MOST TEARSTAINED EDITOR

"Dear Colleague, I would like to reiterate my thanks and admiration for everyone's massive efforts this week, especially with today's early edition.

"It has probably been the most difficult week of our careers for all of us. But I believe we should be enormously proud of the newspapers we have produced and the sensitivity shown, as well as the journalistic excellence, in our coverage.

"We will continue to be criticised, and we will have to deal with that when the time is right. But for the moment, we have lost a dear friend who gave us a unique cocktail of glamour, compassion and controversy that filled the pages of the *Sun* for many years.

"We should be very grateful.

"She, in turn, liked the *Sun* and more importantly recognised the importance and influence of our readers.

"Now she is gone.

"Tomorrow, for those of us not actually covering the funeral, will be the first day off since the tragedy but the Princess will dominate our thoughts.

"I hope that you can be amongst your closest friends and family and pay tribute to a remarkable woman.

"Thank you."

— Onion-assisted memo to hacks at Wapping from *Sun* editor Stuart "Sensitive" Higgins.

MOST DISCREET FRIEND

"I think it was about ten years ago that A. N. Wilson repeated a private conversation he had had with the Queen Mother... I'm about to do a Wilson and repeat a royal but private conversation..."

— Taki, reporting Diana's comments to him about Dodi, *Spectator*, 16 August.

"Private conversations are, of course, to be kept private, so I will write only of my impressions of Princess Diana."

— Taki, *Spectator*, 6 September.

MOST ABSENT-MINDED MP

"Absolutely toe-curling... I can't account for what the Princess was talking about... It is really the advanced stages of paranoia."

— Nicholas Soames MP on Diana, *Newsnight*, 22 November 1995.

"I'm very impressed by how many tributes have come from overseas. It's amazing how much she was held in respect. I greatly admired the way she campaigned against landmines... I have seen her often with the children and I know how much she loved them and they loved her... The tabloid press in this country need to examine their conscience... She had very strong instincts and I am in no doubt she had great gifts in reaching out to the poor, indisposed and sick. They are great qualities. She was a great beauty. She was an icon for her generation..."

— Nicholas Soames MP, *Mid-Sussex Times*, 4 September 1997.

MOST VERSATILE PUNDIT

"The British public was in love with Diana. Men loved her for obvious reasons. Women loved her, as has been said many times since she died, because she went public with many of their concerns... She was, as so many of the cards and posters and messages on the railings of the palace aver, one of us... It's as simple and as personal as that. And that is why we weep for ourselves and for her."

— A. N. Wilson, *Time* magazine.

"Am I alone in thinking that the country has momentarily taken leave of its senses? Am I alone in thinking that there is a total disparity between the feelings of the mob and the feelings of well-balanced, intelligent people?... Those who think along these lines have watched with astonishment at the scenes played out on the streets of London over the past 10 days. We do not begin to understand why anyone, let alone tens of thousands of people, should wish to stay up all night in a sleeping bag, or pile flowers 10ft high, or leave messages to Di and Dodi on every available wall, lamppost and railing between St James's and Buckingham Palace... Are we really such babies that we need, or ask for, such figures in our lives?"

— A. N. Wilson, London *Evening Standard*.

MOST CONSISTENT NEWSPAPER

"The royal family is in danger of appearing archaic and coldly out of touch. In response to a tragedy that has pierced Britain to the heart, our monarchy has been mute. While people queue patiently for hours to place on record just what Diana meant to them, from the Queen has come not a syllable. She should have found a way of expressing the nation's sadness."

— Editorial in *Daily Mail*, 4 September.

"How cruel we are... We congratulate ourselves on our own grief for a Princess whom few of us met, pour pity on her two bereft sons — and then, in an act of wholly selfish cruelty, bitterly attack the two people whom those two young Princes love more than anyone or anything else in their shattered world. We call their beloved father cold and unfeeling; their beloved granny stuffy and obsessed with protocol: will this be a *comfort* to the two boys for whom we allegedly care?"

— Ann Leslie, *Daily Mail*, 6 September.

MOST ACCURATE PREDICTION

"I believe that on formal occasions one should behave with propriety and respect. I'm utterly certain that there will not be a tear from either Harry or William at their mother's funeral."

— Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 4 September.

"William for the first time looked utterly defenceless. The tears finally came and as they sat on the gilt-and-red velvet chairs he kept his protective hand over his face. His fingers held his trembling mouth in position and wiped away the tears... Prince Harry's delicate, sweet face finally crumpled. He cried like a child who was screaming inwardly: 'I want Mummy back'."

— Lynda Lee-Potter reports on the funeral, Daily Mail, 8 September.

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MOST INGENIOUS MARKETING

"Mercedes-Benz. Engineered to move the human spirit."

— Advert on front of the *South China Morning Post*'s Internet edition, 2 September, directly next to a report on the police inquiry into Diana's fatal smash in a Mercedes-Benz.

MOST GENEROUS GESTURE

"Dear Colleague, As many libraries will be closing on Saturday 6th September out of respect for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, it is anticipated that you may not want to charge fines on items for that day... Where fines are to be waived the operator must be given the enablement to waive fines in the Utilities/Permissions/Rules menu. (See System Manager 2: Application Maintenance, Chapter 9: Managing Enablements for details.) In Talis 7 customers can also use Operator Override on the Exceptions List where available."

— Letter from Kevin O'Shea of BLCMP Library Services Ltd, Birmingham.

MOST HEROIC SACRIFICE

"As a mark of the farming community's respect for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, NFU President Sir David Naish will be suspending all work on his farm in Newark, Nottinghamshire, between 11am and 12 noon on Saturday morning during the memorial service at Westminster Abbey. For further information contact the NFU press office."

— Press release from National Farmers' Union.

MOST DIGNIFIED APOLOGY

"We apologise for the Princess Diana Page One headline 'Di Goes Sex Mad' that is still on the stands in some locations. This issue was locked up last week before her death and went on sale Friday 29 August 1997. It is currently being replaced as quickly as we are able with a special 72-page tribute issue: 'A Farewell to the Princess We All Loved... Di — Her Final Hours'."

— Statement issued by *National Enquirer*.

Street Of Shame

LORD SPENCER moves among the great and good making the case for a new privacy law — without mentioning his own negotiations a few months ago with *Hello!* magazine for a huge colour feature about his South African house and family.

The *Guardian* suggested he asked half a million pounds for the feature, but the real figure was a mere quarter of a million. Spencer explained to the surprised *Hello!* that such a vast sum was appropriate because of the embarrassment he might suffer during his campaign for a privacy law. He would, the people's earl explained, have to put up with a lot of criticism from people who didn't understand his position. There might well be flak about the hypocrisy of his demands for a law to protect people's families — while selling a feature about his own family.

Hello! turned down Spencer's extravagant demand explaining that it just didn't pay that kind of money.

LIKE Italy after the war, where it was impossible to find anyone who had supported Mussolini, one can no longer find anyone who will admit to having been a paparazzo. Most indignant of all is veteran celebrity snapper Richard Young, who has been loudly telling colleagues he is *not* a paparazzo: he only goes where he is invited.

This is odd, for eight years ago the wretched Young published a book called, er, *Paparazzo*, in which he said: "No Jewish mother would choose a career as a paparazzo photographer for her boy... A guy who jumps out and photographs people when they're least expecting it doesn't seem to win the same respect from the public as, say, a bank manager or an accountant, which is what my mother would really like me to be."

But that was then. The paparazzo formerly known as Richard Young is today *a society portraitist*, don't you know!

MOURNING manifests itself in mysterious ways. Royal courtiers like the queen's press secretary Jeff Crawford — who used to tell hacks: "Wait till I really tell you what the woman is really like" — have been almost contrite since Diana's death and have even begun to answer newspaper inquiries properly instead of resorting to "palacespeak".

Even Diana's former private secretary Patrick Jeffson has popped up everywhere in the last fortnight, moist-eyed. When he was last spotted in public before the fateful day, however, he was on rather different form.

Then — about a week before Diana's death — Jeffson was a guest of *Sun* editor Stuart Higgins at the leaving do (held at the Prospect of Whitby pub) of louche royal hack Wayne Francis. Higgins made a hilarious speech, much of which wittily questioned Diana's sanity and stability. How Jeffson then chortled!

THE *Daily Mail* has led from the front in denouncing intrusive journalism, so it is sad to record a furious row between its royal correspondent Richard Kay, a confidant of the late Princess of Wales, and executives on his disgusting newspaper.

Kay was personally invited to the funeral service at Westminster Abbey but did not write a word about it — despite the demands of his bosses at Associated Newspapers, who insisted the grieving hack file an eyewitness account.

A blazing row ensued, but Kay dug his heels in. He had, he said, been invited as a personal friend of Diana and not as a journalist — a distinction, it seems, executives at the *Mail* were temporarily unable to make due to their distress at the death of the princess.

THIS month's TUC bash in Brighton prompted *Guardian* columnist Hugo Young to wax lyrical on the need for strong trade unions to defend oppressed workers "when their rights are attacked by capital".

Young even used his column on 9 September to praise militant United Parcel Service workers in the US who had just won a bitter strike "giving organised labour its first significant triumph for 15 years".

Strong stuff. And no doubt the workers' friend Hugo Young will be pledging his support to a workforce in Manchester currently suffering under the yoke of capital in the shape of an employer that has imposed a pay freeze, slashed jobs and cut holidays. The Spart-like Young should be aware of the case, because the workforce in question is employed by the *Manchester Evening News* which, like the *Guardian*, is owned by the Scott Trust.

Perhaps he could take up the matter with the heartless chairman of the Scott Trust. One, er, Hugo Young.

SENIOR hacks at *Time Out* magazine are continuing the paper's long tradition of enlightened relationships with the lower orders. Passers-by outside Warren Street tube station in central London were privileged recently to witness a heated confrontation between a cab driver and the mag's executive editor, Steve Grant.

Grant had begun his journey by berating the cabbie for making him cross Tottenham Court Road to pick up the ride. Things got worse after two red lights. Grant, who had been "working late", then became increasingly outraged by the number of prohibitions inside the cab, which included two "No Smoking" stickers, three "Thank you for not smoking" signs, a warning that cheques and credit cards were not accepted and a note that the law required passengers to wear seatbelts. Tapping the driver firmly on the shoulder, Grant inquired: "Excuse me mate, do you mind if I have a wank?"

The two men continued their discussion in the street, where phrases such as "fat, bearded cunt" and "fucking little tinpot Hitler" were soon heard floating on the night air.

DAVID "Rommel" Montgomery, head of Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN) and begetter of the "Academy of Excellence" which aims to improve standards among journalists, continues to set an excellent example himself.

Two veteran *Sunday Mirror* staff, Andrew Golden and Bob Bayliss, were fired last week shortly after writing to Montgomery expressing doubts about his "academy". A spokesman for editor Bridget "Death" Rowe assured *UK Press Gazette* that the sackings were "a result of restructuring in their departments" and had nothing to do with their union activities. The fact that they were head and deputy head of the NUJ chapel was coincidental.

As it surely was three weeks ago at the *Independent on Sunday*, another MGN paper, where assistant editor Barbara Gunnell was summarily dismissed as part of another "restructuring" — and not because she ran the *Sindie*'s NUJ chapel which had voted to boycott the wretched academy.

The academy aims to improve standards of accuracy, honesty and responsibility in journalism, but there was precious little evidence of that in two of his titles' coverage of Diana's funeral. Indeed, the *Sunday Mirror* and *People* stood alone in refusing to report Earl Spencer's criticisms of the tabloids — even though they had been witnessed on TV by millions.

Perhaps this was because "Death" Rowe, who is editor-in-chief of both rags, is still embarrassed by her disastrous record of recent royal "scoops". Apart from splurging £300,000 on the original grainy paparazzi shots of Di and Dodi, her *Sunday Mirror* boasted a "world exclusive" announcing that the princess was secretly engaged to heart surgeon Hasnat Khan at a time when (unbeknown to Bridget) she was dating Dodi.

Two weeks before the funeral she ran another "world exclusive" claiming Prince Philip was virtually at death's door — which drew a rare and instant rebuttal from the palace rubbishing the story as total fiction. A few weeks ago the *Sunday Mirror*'s front page also solemnly announced that the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Kent was over. No sign of that, either.

Rommel's idea of "excellence" must by necessity be fairly elastic. His flag-rag, the *Daily Mirror*, has received a writ after publishing without permission a picture of Prince William. Readers of other papers learned the writ was brought due to the *Mirror*'s "utter disregard" for Lord Wakeham's plea for privacy for William and because the picture was published "flagrantly in the belief that the benefit to be gained far exceeded the damages at risk". Owing to lack of space there was no mention of this in the "excellent" *Mirror*, which ran a piece headlined "Sensitivity And Pictures Were Comfort: Thank You Mirror".

THERE are worries about the sanity of Will Hutton, editor of the *Observer*, following his address to the Food Standards Agency conference which his paper was supporting.

Hutton arrived 20 minutes late on the second day for a keynote address. He had no idea what had already been discussed (genetically modified foods, pesticides, labelling, etc), so the great stakeholder busked it, saying he would take 10 minutes to "talk about three things, really: regulation, the food chain itself and demand" before starting on a 20-minute ramble which touched on...

Diana and her tragic death and impossibly long legs; how one of the best things that had happened was that Charles couldn't now marry Camilla; how he was in Colorado when the e.coli outbreak happened; the pressures on British industry to keep their costs down; constitutional reform and more Diana; our new "flexible" workforce and absolute levels of UK poverty; stakeholding; how he's learnt, since editing the *Observer*, that it's all down to how you pay and hire people; how amazing the 43 books of condolence were at St James's; where the British people are at; and how the avalanche of public grief over Diana is indirectly, er, linked to the groundswell of concern about the food chain. He then muttered that because of Di not much about the conference would be in his paper, wished everyone "Godspeed" and rushed off.

AFTER receiving a tip-off that Michael Barrymore was in a London gay-club downing champagne in rather alarming quantities, the *Sun* newsdesk immediately despatched a hack and a photographer to the "den of vice".

When they arrived at the nightspot, however, there was no sign of Barrymore. What they found instead were two young male editorial colleagues from the *Sun*, strutting the light fantastic together on the dance floor. Curiously, this equally newsworthy spectacle went unreported in the paper.

WEE Willie Hague's dismay at the "sad" result of the Scottish devolution referendum reflects his disappointment that the Scots spurned his personally launched poster campaign for a no-no vote.

Hague travelled to darkest Edinburgh to unveil the first billboard; and a massive total of two additional posters were then unveiled across the length and breadth of Scotland, ie in Glasgow. Lack of funds was the official explanation from central office. But this is only part of the story.

Up to and including the last election many business supporters (particularly tobacco companies) gave the Tories free billboard space. The fact that none was willing to donate sites this time is ominous. And it may also help explain the mysterious non-appearance of Hague's question for a referendum on the now all but forgotten Amsterdam Treaty.

On 1 July Hague made numerous media appearances demanding that Tony Blair should put the results of the then just finished EU summit to the people. In the *Times* Michael Howard, shadow foreign secretary, penned a dreary article headed "We demand a voice on Amsterdam" which concluded: "The British people should be given the chance to say whether they think it is a good deal for Britain. And that means a referendum."

These pleas were said to be the first evidence of Hague's fightback against Blairite hegemony, but no more has been heard of the "demand" since, least of all the actual question to be voted on. One explanation (apart from the fact that Hague and Howard were talking balls) is that the majority of past corporate donors are now happy enough with Blair — even with his acceptance of the EU social chapter. And just as they were unwilling to cough up for a proper anti-devolution campaign, they're similarly unlikely to pay for Hague's planned party reforms or future elections.

SHOULD the devolution vote in Wales go pear-shaped, lacklustre Welsh secretary Ron Davies may be forced to carry the can. Having already obliged Tony Blair to publicly deny that Davies had ever threatened the devolution rebel Llew Smith (*Eyes passim*), when that is just what he had done, Davies has now succeeded in so enraging other Labour rebels with his bad humoured taunts that they have finally broken their silence to tell all and sundry that they will be voting "no".

Joining Llew Smith in the "No" booth will be veteran Labour MPs Sir Ray Powell, Denzil Davies and Allan Rogers.

WELSH Labour MPs have been ordered to fax cuttings from their local papers to Millbank HQ to prove they're pulling their weight in the devolution campaign. The rebel gang of four — Llew Smith, Sir Ray Powell, Alan Williams and Allan Rogers — are not the only ones likely to abstain in this touching exercise of trust.

MORE on the directorships of Tory party chairman and businessman par excellence, Cecil Parkinson.

One company which boasts Lord Parkie on its board is On Demand Information, an online business information provider. Despite the asset of this accomplished politician with his intelligence and good contacts, ODI has recently admitted that it will not be making a profit this year after all.

It blames a lost production contract and the delay of its iNTERNET2 service which was meant to be up and running already. Graham Poulter, executive chairman, is to retire, and merger and acquisitions advisers have been called in. Poor Parkie.

GERALD HOWARTH, Tory MP for Aldershot, reacted furiously to the news that there were Kurds among the 85 people arrested during a demonstration against the Royal Navy and British Army Equipment Exhibition at Farnborough.

Howarth suggested they should all be shipped straight back to Turkey (where they face certain imprisonment and probably worse). But somehow his statement, which made the front page of the *Aldershot News* on 5 Sept, forgot to mention Howarth's long association with the British arms industry. He was for instance a director of Richard Unwin International, a leading arms exporter, and was from 1987 to 1990 a parliamentary consultant to Astra, an ambitious arms company.

PS: 12 of the Kurds arrested were released without charge.

IN a last minute bid to get the spin doctor formerly known as Peter Mandelson elected to Labour's ruling NEC, party staffers have been encouraged to ring around constituency secretaries, generously offering bundles of copies of *New Labour, New Britain's Campaign Guide*, which helpfully come with an enormous picture of a smiling Mandy replete with his praise for "a record in government that every party member can be proud to shout about".

DOES the Labour party want to recruit former workers at Conservative central office? Yes, to judge by a recent job advert.

Labour is recruiting for its "winning media team". The successful applicant would "have a minimum of two years in political media monitoring, and *experience of running such an operation for a party in government*".

So it's not just ideas they're nicking from the Tories...

'Backbiter'

"Coffee after the service: Please come down to the basement and say hell to the vicar." *The Signpost*

EYE TOLD YOU SO

THE *Sunday Telegraph* reports that "hundreds of people have received unexpected 'windfalls' from the Inland Revenue because of computer errors", and millions of self-assessment forms now winging their way to the inspectors will only exacerbate computer problems.

And who provides the Inland Revenue's self-assessment computer programme? Step forward the *Eye*'s old friend EDS, the giant Texas computer firm which now holds more than half the UK government's computer contracts. *Eye* readers will recall its other notable successes for the Child Support Agency and Student Loans computer systems — notable for being, er, complete disasters.

ENERGY NEWS

JOHN BATTLE, the energy minister, is facing his first crisis thanks to Richard Budge, the man who bought the coal industry on the cheap.

Budge now wants government money to save his troubled empire and suggests that it should come from the already woefully small amount spent by government on renewable energy. His plan is that he will invest in "clean coal" if the government hands over a subsidy from NUFFO — the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation designed for renewable, non-fossil fuels. The problem is, er: coal *is* a fossil fuel and it is *not* renewable.

Coincidentally just such a scheme was outlined by Battle himself in an interview with the *Observer* in February. He suggested re-naming NUFFO as the Clean Fuel Levy to include clean coal. This aroused furious opposition from Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and others, and Liberal energy spokesman Matthew Taylor said the plan was "bizarre" because it would make global warming worse.

Clean coal reduces sulphur dioxide but makes virtually no difference to carbon dioxide emissions. It is worse than even a gas-fired plant and in no way comparable with clean renewables such as wind power, which NUFFO is supposed to promote.

The cost of NUFFO is added to everyone's electricity bill and is designed to make renewable and nuclear electricity competitive and thereby slow down the generators' insatiable appetite for coal, gas and oil. NUFFO started as a 10 percent levy on the total bill and around 90 percent of that went to the nukes — more than £1,000m a year. The amount has gradually been reduced: in 1996/97 down to £844m, with the nukes still receiving the lion's share — £731m compared with £112m for all renewables.

But it is not the larger, nuclear portion which is being targeted. Budge is arguing that clean coal should be subsidised by cutting the contribution to renewable energy. The government, hoping to save what it can of the coal mines, could tell the nuclear industry to cut back its output, reducing its need for subsidy and at the same time making way for other, less unacceptable ways of making energy. Instead, attention is being focused on cutting the grant to the renewables.

Budge doesn't have an entirely happy relationship with other people's money. His family firm went into receivership in 1992 leaving unsecured creditors with losses of around £65m.

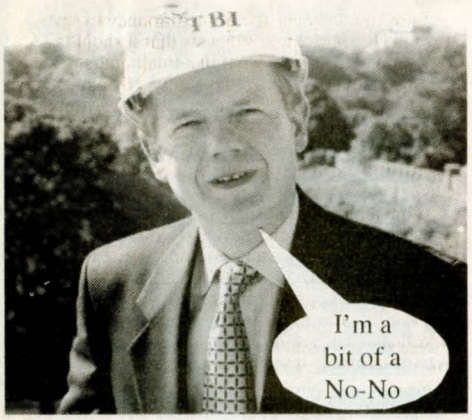
PR WEAK

WILL Camilla Parker Bowles ever now be able to venture out in public again?

Her tricky rehabilitation was already under way thanks to Prince Charles who, during their respective divorces, had secured the (unpaid) services of suave Lowe Bell PR surgeon Alan Kilkenny.

Dumpy but dandyish Kilkenny had been working overtime to guide Camilla into the affections of the British public. Perhaps Charles hoped he could do for Camilla what his boss, the great Sir Tim Bell, had done, er, for the Tories at the last election.

HAGUE: SCOTLAND DECIDES



THE NEW BOYS 6:

Michael Wills

MICHAEL WILLS is a fully paid up member of the "luvvy brigade" (second division), who by dint of his friends — P. Mandelson and G. Brown — and good old fashioned smarm, succeeded in turfing out Old Labour's horny-handed standard bearer in a bitter selection battle in Swindon North.

The nattily turned out Wills was educated at Cambridge and is married to Catherine Freeman, a former producer of LWT's *South Bank Show*. Before becoming an LWT producer himself, Wills also managed a stint in the diplomatic service, honing the skills he would later need to charm the selectors of Swindon. But it was as a producer for LWT that Wills befriended Peter Mandelson, who, as his junior, worked on Bwian Walden's *Weekend World*. The programme became something of a current affairs mould breaker, customarily setting its own agenda by way of an introductory film to which quivering interviewees were obliged to respond.

When the unheard of Wills tipped up in Swindon in search of a nomination, the incumbent candidate for the two previous elections — Rover shop steward Jim D'Avila — fell about laughing. With comradely generosity he accused Wills of being a "carpet bagger" before organising a photo call to record his moment of victory even before the selection meeting had taken place.

Sadly for D'Avila, smoothy Wills had done his homework and romped home on the back of constituency postal votes. As class war erupted, horny-handed Jim told the local press that New Labour "didn't want a dirty fingernailed car worker as a candidate," while London-based hacks decamped to report that the Swindon party was being torn apart with middle class supporters of Wills and working class supporters of D'Avila swapping insults.

D'Avila hired lawyer Michael Short — brother of Clare — to take his case to Labour's NEC and his union, the AEU, made its displeasure known. Despite alleging that the ballot had been tampered with, it was all to no avail and smoothy Wills was confirmed in place. So enraged became the usually loyal AEU that its general secretary was later to cite Swindon as one of the reasons for withholding cash to the party in a vituperative article in the *Independent*.

Wills may not have been quite prepared for such a baptism of fire. Immediately prior to the election he developed cold feet and intimated that he didn't really want to stand after all. Having been gently reminded of the sacrifice of others on his part, he has since been elected to parliament only to sink without trace.

Rotten Boroughs

West Dunbartonshire

CAN Scotland actually afford to devolve more power to the "people"? Much of the £140,000 of public money West Dunbartonshire council paid to the West Dumbarton Activity Centre, for example, has gone missing.

No one knows exactly how much or where it has gone, but the catalogue of cock-ups and knock-offs, small and big, is astonishing.

Nearly £7,000 in cash is adrift, and a safe which should have held between £600 and £700 in takings had just one crumpled £20 note in it. There are no receipts for scores of taxi rides, trips to a cash-and-carry warehouse or prizes to winners of sports tournaments.

No official authorisation was made to buy a minibus for £1,650. No one at the centre was qualified to drive it, but that didn't stop one youth volunteer who was fined for driving without a licence. Centre managers then spent £582 on driving lessons for him.

One committee member signed blank cheques to avoid having to go into the centre; dolites were paid in cash to avoid problems with the DSS; and one manager on a wage of £12,864 earned £29,548 in the last financial year thanks to overtime payments sanctioned by, er, himself.

Glasgow

Despite big cuts affecting the city's poorest, the council has continued to pay staff who resigned or were made redundant 16 months ago.

This was discovered when a lady received a cheque intended for a school teacher who had left her job and house in April 1996. The balls-up will cost Glaswegians around £300,000 — on top of the 22 percent council tax increase in April.

Enfield

DESPITE a fierce campaign by residents against a 1,300-home development on a former MoD munitions base that is contaminated with arsenic, asbestos, lead and other goodies, Enfield council has given developer Fairviews planning permission.

Indeed, at a recent meeting of the council's environment committee, members of Enfield Lock Action Group, representing 700 residents, were abused by environment chair Cllr Richard Course. He told the local *Enfield Gazette* later: "There were of course one or two level-headed objectors but they were outweighed — and that is the right word — by the unwashed, hysterical, hate-filled women who do not live in the area." An apology has been asked for, but not given.

Islington

HAS Chris Smith, heritage secretary and Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury, been ordered by his party HQ to put the boot into his local council?

Islington councillors certainly think so after he leaked a story to the *Highbury and Islington Express* that he and fellow Islington MP Jeremy Corbyn were to confront top brass at the council over the appalling services it delivers. The truth, in fact, is that the council's own Labour leaders requested the meeting with Smith and Corbyn to ask what reaction they got while canvassing during the election.

Is this the beginning of a campaign to distance the national party from municipal embarrassments? Either way, with local elections next May, Labour troops in the borough are downhearted.

In Memoriam

MORE evidence has emerged of the very close relationship between Hackney Labour group and paedophile Mark Trotter, the children's home worker who died of AIDS in July 1995.

Minutes of a Hackney Labour party executive meeting, held nine months after Trotter's death, reveal that party members were asked to set up a memorial to honour him. The proposal was discussed even though Merseyside police had contacted Hackney because they wanted to question Trotter about paedophile activity in Liverpool, where he used to work. Proposals for the memorial were firmly quashed only when the cover-up was exposed by Cllr Hettie Peters and the truth became public knowledge.

Redbridge

The long-awaited report into the pensions scandal at the then Tory-controlled Redbridge council reveals that over 13 years the east London borough made £1.3m of unlawful pensions payments.

These included £64,000 to former chief executive Geoff Price over and above his legitimate pension; and £54,000 too much to his one-time deputy Maurice Tilley. Both retired in 1993. Tilley sanctioned Price's pension plan — and Price sanctioned Tilley's!

Had the district auditor not been alerted a total of £8m of public money could eventually have been paid out by mistake. The auditor, who found that managers earning more than £25,000 a year had an 88 percent chance of getting an unlawful pension if they retired in the early 1990s, is also looking at alleged masonic involvement: only 7 percent of those overpaid were women.

Redbridge has now reduced payments but will not try to recover the unlawful sums "save in the case of three former officers" – Price, Tilley and Tilley's predecessor, Stewart Fuller, who got £130,000 extra after retiring in 1984. The files have been sent to Inspector Knacker while the DA thinks about surcharges.

PS: Price is now a pensions consultant in the City and Tilley a financial correspondent for *Local Government Chronicle*.

EYE TV

The Death And Burial of Diana, Princess of Wales (All Channels)

PUBLICLY, broadcasters are saying it would be wrong to try to score such sombre coverage as if it were a football game. Privately, however, the BBC believes it stuffed ITV.

That's probably true. Despite the quantity of "ordinary" members of the public banging on about modernisation and reform of institutions this week, the public still likes its state occasions to come from the BBC and a Dimbleby. (To his horror, Jonathan Dimbleby was omitted from the ITV coverage, which he had hoped to anchor, because of his over-close relationship with the dead princess's ex-husband.)

The corporation, though, had its disasters, mainly arising from the belief that tragedy calls for bad Celtic semi-poetry to be boomed. Tom Fleming did his infamous McGonagall act in the abbey ("You gave us your love and now we send you ours as you leave on this your final journey... etc"), while Ferghal Keane — BBC news' chief emotion merchant — was flown in from Hong Kong to do his self-regarding blarney in the Mall.

In another way, too, the funeral coverage showed the BBC at its worst. This was in the area of "appropriate" surrounding programmes. Terrified of giving offence to mourning Britons, the "Category One" death coverage policy calls for the removal of all controversial material from the schedules. So *Casualty* was dropped (hospitals, you see); as was an expensive new psychological thriller *Bright Hair*, due to start on the Sunday night. (ITV postponed a Tony Hancock remake because it included a scene in a hospital bed.)

Yet, the supposedly anodyne emergency programmes introduced by the BBC in fact offended people anyway. The BBC duty officers actually received several complaints from viewers who had taken as a sardonic reference to her private life the merely ham-fisted continuity announcement: "Because of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, several unscheduled programmes are being shown. There now follows the feature film *Free Willy*."

Equally, to some viewers' dismay, on BBC2 on the Saturday of the funeral, the programme *The Journey To Althorp* — following Diana's coffin to her childhood haunt of Northamptonshire — was followed by the film *Lassie Come Home*. The bad taste was not deliberate, just the bad luck of a rushed job.

Other emergency scheduling decisions merely seemed silly. BBC2 cancelled the launch of its much hyped new virtual reality science fiction thriller *VR5* but replaced it with an episode from *The Outer Limits*, a notably violent storyline which also featured virtual reality as a theme.

And such disruptions are not merely temporary. Several unseen shows are now likely to be judged untransmittable by execs frightened by the pious public mood. On Friday 5 September *The Prince of Hearts* — a lavish Screen One comedy about a royal prince at university — was regarded as a gem in the autumn schedule. One day later it had become a perceived embarrassment which some fear may never now be seen.

Definitely out is a *Royal Trivia Quiz* — hosted by *Telegraph* palace-watcher Robert Hardman — which had recently been piloted. There's also a sitcom about life below stairs in a royal palace. However, the most serious consequences of the Diana events for the BBC, may be that two important principles of its news coverage were suspended for a fortnight.

Analysis (the Birtian watchword) was completely abandoned in favour of gentle reportage of often comment-worthy events. The coverage was obsessively tailored towards what the public was perceived to want from the BBC. A proactive news operation became entirely reactive.

These can be seen as emergency concessions but, for the first time since Birtism, the BBC had followed an entirely populist programming agenda. In the more impressionable executives, the fear of offending the people is likely to last for some time with down-numbing consequences for the schedules. The resulting people's television did not however reflect a democracy — but a dictatorship of sentimentality.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

MOHAMED FAYED's ubiquitous mouthpiece Michael Cole has insisted that he and his boss want only to "discover the truth".

If so, this will be something of a novelty for the Phoney Pharaoh, who has always had severe difficulties distinguishing fact from fiction. As department of trade inspectors noted several years ago: "The lies of Mohamed Fayed and his success in 'gagging' the press created new fact: that lies were the truth and that the truth was a lie."

If he is now so committed to honesty, it's surprising he should choose Paul Handley-Greaves to preside over a press conference two weeks ago at which the Ritz Hotel's security videos of Diana and Dodi were screened. For Handley-Greaves, who was introduced as a security expert, is another shameless liar.

He last surfaced a year ago when he contacted *Vanity Fair* magazine, which was preparing its defence for a mega-libel suit brought by Fayed. Posing as a disaffected former head of security at Harrods who wanted to get even with his old boss, Handley-Greaves told *VF*'s London editor, Henry Porter, that he could provide incriminating videos and audiotapes if the magazine were willing to pay. Suspecting a set-up, Porter declined the offer.

The whole operation was indeed a sting organised by Fayed in the hope of discrediting *Vanity Fair*. But although Porter didn't fall for it, Fayed's henchmen nevertheless tipped off the *Mail on Sunday*. "Police are investigating claims that an editor of the upmarket magazine *Vanity Fair* tried to buy tapes he thought were stolen in a bid to defend a libel action from Mohamed Al-Fayed," reported the *MoS*'s ever-gullible crime correspondent Chester Stern — only to have to apologise a week later when it became clear that Porter had done nothing of the kind.

The story peddled to Porter by Handley-Greaves was untrue from start to finish. So why should anyone believe him — or his equally dishonest boss — now?

AFTER Diana's death, American TV viewers were puzzled to see Michael Cole appearing on *Larry King Live* every night for a week, promoting the Fayed version of events in Paris. Why, they wondered, did Larry King allow this guy so much unchallenged airtime — especially as his story was increasingly at odds with the account given by the Paris police?

It may be pure coincidence that the senior producer of *Larry King Live*, Wendy Walker-Whitworth, is an old friend of Mohamed Fayed — and that after getting married a couple of years ago she spent her honeymoon at... the Ritz Hotel, Paris.

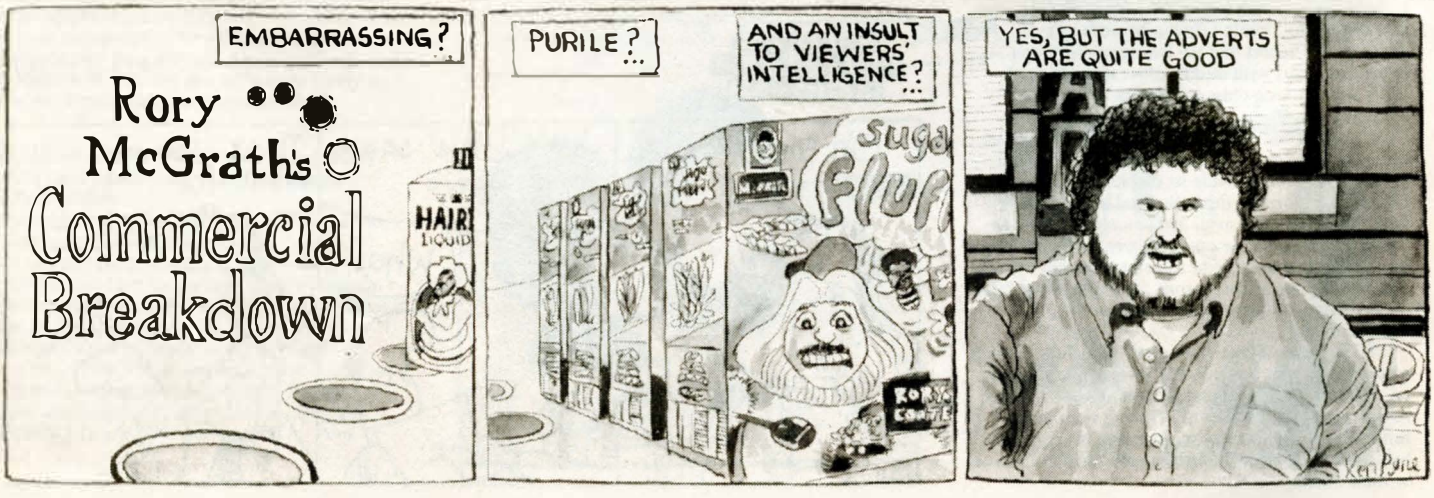
BBC HOAX

ONE of the first people to ring CNN with a "live" eyewitness account of Princess Diana's fatal crash was one Michael Solomon — who described the scene in an absurd Woody Allen voice. "And what happened next?" asked the anchorman.

"Baba Booey!" came the reply.

This is a catchphrase from the American shock-jock Howard Stern, who has for years encouraged his listeners to phone CNN with bogus testimony about breaking stories. It happened after the bombs in Oklahoma and Atlanta; and it happened in the hours after Princess Diana's demise. As soon as the CNN host heard the dreaded punchline, he delivered a pious lecture about the sick morality of people who make these calls.

Shortly afterwards, at 6.30 on the Sunday morning, the "Michael Solomon" interview was rebroadcast on BBC1 as if it were a genuine eyewitness account. So how did the BBC deal with the "Baba Booey" punchline or the CNN presenter's admission that it was all a hoax? Simple: it cut them out.



TELELUBBIES

THE actor sacked from his role as Tinky Winky, the tallest of the Teletubbies, has found a new job as Fin Fin, a hybrid dolphin…

Mr Thompson, 37, said yesterday: "Being Fin Fin is like playing Hamlet compared to being a Teletubby. It's a move up in children's entertainment for me…"

"…I loved being Tinky Winky. I put my heart and soul into it and if I could have continued I would have…"

"Showbiz is one of the toughest jobs there is. The secret of survival is to bounce back with a positive and creative mind and move into the future…"

"I see my future very optimistically and would love to play King Lear."

Daily Telegraph

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

"MAJOR" James Hewitt's tearful TV tribute to Diana, made 48 hours after the death of his former lover, was very different to his performance the previous afternoon when he was tracked to his holiday hideaway on the Costa del Sol by freelance hack Nigel Bowden and two Spanish *paparazzi*.

In the circumstances, the sleazy trio agreed there was no profit in a snatched pic of Hewitt and his ladyfriend, so they decided to see if he would pose for a dignified portrait and say something poignant. What happened next shocked even these beastly hacks.

As they approached the villa they spotted Hewitt slumped over a wooden table littered with beer and wine bottles. He stared vaguely in their direction then staggered inside. Two friends then emerged to shout abuse, and Bowden explained that they only wanted Hewitt to say something nice about Di.

"We're just four lads getting drunk," snarled one of Hewitt's chums. "Now go away." With this he dropped his boxer shorts and mooned through the iron gates to reveal a plump white bottom with a green peacock tattooed on the right buttock.

Peals of girlish giggles wafted from the villa, whereupon the baffled hacks beat a hasty retreat — only to be stunned the following day to witness Hewitt, on TV, breaking down in front of the world's press.

JOHN BIRT and colleagues were happily patting themselves on the back for so accurately judging the nation's mood in their Diana coverage — and then along came Radio 4's *Feedback* programme.

The show is designed to allow listeners to have their say on Radio 4 output. Many hundreds of letters were received about the station's coverage of Diana's death — and 98 out of every 100 registered a complaint. "Way over the top"; "lost all sense of proportion," were common accusations.

Feedback was immediately ordered to delay the programme for a week. The Radio 4 managers' decision was of course based on respect for the late Princess of Wales — and had nothing to do with their complete failure to gauge the real response of their audience.

ONLY months after the row over BBC Drama's chief Chris Parr "borrowing" money from an independent producer, the department is determined to prove it is still committed to rooting out new talent.

It has bought an option on five crime novels by Janet Neel and is in the first stages of developing one of them for the small screen with writer Jeff Case. Case will need all his screen-writing skills to make a success of the less than sizzling material.

Still, if he gets fed up with this thankless task perhaps he can complain to one of the BBC governors — someone like, er, Janet Neel.

NEW BBC1 controller Peter Salmon faces an early run-in with the powerful moguls of BBC Sport.

One of his last jobs as director of programmes at Granada TV was to oversee the July *World in Action* which accused BBC TV's millionaire swimming commentator, Hamilton Bland, of taking "bribes". Most sport — including swimming — is shown on BBC1. The sports department has ignored the allegations and continues to employ Bland. Will Salmon now insist that he is not fit to appear on the channel?

World in Action produced documents alleging that Bland, the Amateur Swimming Association's "facilities adviser", had taken secret kickbacks on contracts to build council-owned pools. It also disclosed that his contracts for drafting lottery applications contained secret "success fees" — while he was simultaneously advising the sports lottery fund on which bids should be approved for funding.

The ASA has set up an inquiry into Bland, led by Mark Gay of lawyers Herbert Smith, but it has done little to distance itself from him. While Bland was in Seville last month, commentating on the European championships, he and ASA chief executive David Sparkes were seen spending convivial days and evenings together, Sparkes even joining Bland in the press box. British hacks covering the event were so surprised they arranged for the happy couple to be snapped, for the record.

HOW SCOOPS WORK…

PRINCESS Diana's body was barely cold when the Press Association rushed forward to claim the credit for breaking the news first. PA executive editor Mike Parry told *UK Press Gazette* how the agency had pulled off its amazing coup thanks to the heroics of diplomatic correspondent Charlie Miller, who was in Manila as part of the party accompanying foreign secretary Robin Cook on a tour of Southeast Asia.

Parry's version of events came as a surprise to the other passengers on Cook's plane. Miller, an unassuming and popular hack, must also have been rather taken aback by the description of what he was supposed to have done. According to Parry, Miller had "watched Cook… turn pale at news delivered to him by aides. Miller asked the right questions."

FACT: when aides told Cook that Diana was dead, the foreign secretary was in the British embassy. Miller and the rest of the press corps were several miles away heading for the airport.

Parry claims that Miller — "using his experience and contacts he had built up over a decade of doing this job" — called from the tarmac at Manila airport at 4.20am London time. The news was grave: "From contacts he'd had with Robin Cook's people it seemed as though the foreign secretary was going to make a statement about the condition of the Princess of Wales and that it was a serious statement."

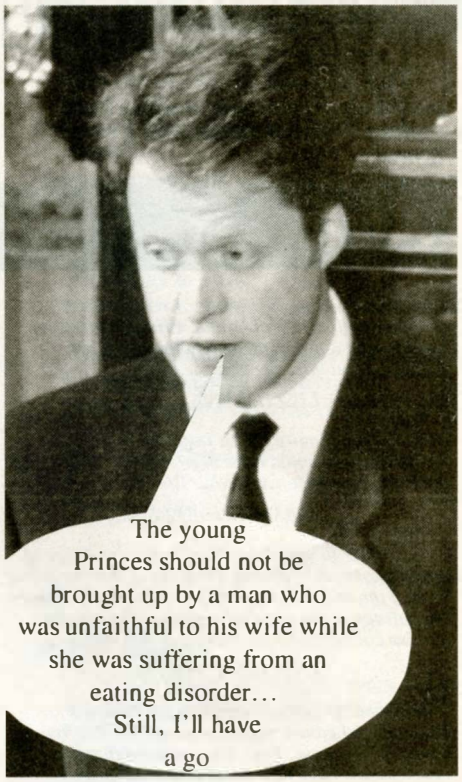
FACT: By that stage a foreign office aide had already told the entire press corps, in confidence, that Diana was dead — but insisted they sit on the news until the French had officially announced it themselves. PA then ran an urgent story saying that Cook's plane had been delayed "amidst growing speculation" that Diana had been killed.

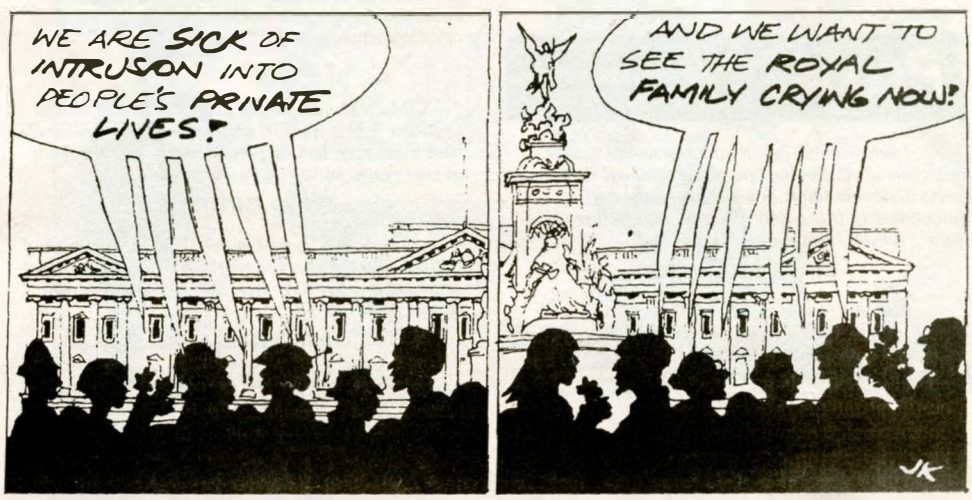
"Ten minutes later," the thrilling *UK Press Gazette* tale continues, "Miller was back on the phone. He could say with certainty, he told Parry, that Diana was dead."

FACT: PA, which had known for more than half an hour that Diana was dead, simply decided to break the foreign office embargo but disguised the provenance of the story by saying it had learned the news "from British sources". Parry knew full well about the embargo because Miller, like all the other hacks on the plane, had called his newsdesk the moment he was tipped off.

Quite what prompted the *Press Gazette* to publish Parry's mendacious fantasy is unclear, but his own motives are obvious enough: he ended by extolling "the accuracy and integrity of the PA". Not.

SPENCER vs WINDSOR


The young Princes should not be brought up by a man who was unfaithful to his wife while she was suffering from an eating disorder… Still, I'll have a go



Letters

THE last issue of PRIVATE EYE (932) provoked an enormous reaction from readers. The ratio so far is 10:1 in our favour.

Anti

Shitbag,
The tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales has brought home to me what a truly shitty magazine you have become…

LESLIE KENT.

…I think a more fitting response to the circumstances would have been for you to have kept your gob shut for once in your life…

SARAH SWIDENBANK.

…I refer to your grossly offensive coverage of the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in this issue. I am at a loss for words to adequately express my outrage at the tasteless nature of the articles and, so called, cartoons printed in this edition…

RICHARD J. FOSTER.

…I had no great admiration for Princess Diana. I wished her neither well nor ill. But, by God, I wish you ill. Your total and complete tastelessness have now gone too far, even for PRIVATE EYE.
Cancel my subscription. I don't want any refund. Just take me off your mailing list. I never want to read your publication or hear of you again. You are the foulest bunch of cretins of whom I have ever known. You are what creeps out, covered in green slime, from beneath large flat stones. You offend the nostrils. You are beneath contempt…

B.W. CLOUGHLEY.

…This edition is in sickeningly bad taste. Princess Diana was an inspiration to ordinary people throughout the world and her death should not be treated facetiously. I shall not be reading, nor will my family be buying, PRIVATE EYE again…

MICHAEL MENAUGH.

…Let it be known at your offices that I have instigated the withdrawal of your latest issue of PRIVATE EYE (932 "Media to Blame") from the following chains, all at head office level: W.H. Smith & Son, John Menzies, One Stop Convenience Stores, Alldays, Martins Newsagents, Solent News and its London distributor, J. Sainsbury PLC, Tesco Stores PLC, Safeway Stores Ltd, F.W. Woolworth, British Airports Authority, Esso, Texaco, British Petroleum and Shell forecourt newspaper franchises. "Jokes" of this nature, and at this time of national grieving especially, will NOT be tolerated!! The laugh's on you this time, arsehole!! Have a nice day!…

A. JONES.

Pro

…I was worried about how you would handle this issue of PE. But the biting satire mined rich veins of double-think, double standards and palpable evil. It is a tour de force; and well worth a year's subscription. Congratulations…

DR A.C. CHAMBER.

…Can this reader of 34 years' standing therefore offer his warmest congratulations on the remarkable objectivity of issue 932; such a rare quality in the current hysterical climate…

J.E. MEADOWS.

…Re: Gnome's Apology (932). Spot on…

STEVEN HAYES.

…Congratulations on excellent "Media to Blame" issue. All copies were withdrawn from the stand by a newsagent in York as the cover was considered too controversial…

P. WILDGUST.

…Just a quick note to say thanks to you for not ducking your satirical responsibilities this week. You might reasonably expect a couple of cancelled subscriptions, but I think that, compared to the hypocrisy in print elsewhere, you've shown pureness of both heart and purpose…

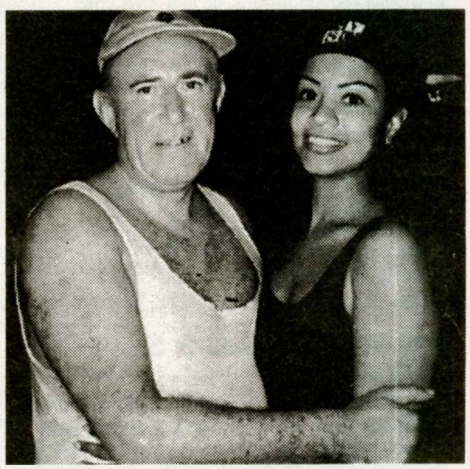
MATTHEW LEES.

…I thought issue 932 was worth the subscription alone, even before my (subless) friend found that it had been removed from the newsagent's shelves…

DAN SHIRLEY.

…Congratulations! At last somebody has put this into proper perspective…

EDDIE MURPHY.



Sir,
During the last sad few days I witnessed an editor of a Scottish newspaper on NEWSNIGHT lamenting the fact that "if you believe that there will be a voluntary stop to the invasion of people's private lives by newspapers you will believe in the tooth fairy".
In Lord Gnome's archives have you any photos that show an invasion of privacy amongst the good and the great?

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT H.E. BACKHOUSE

…Just a note to thank you for 932, which provides an excellent antidote to the media "sanctification" of Diana, Regina Caeli. Keep up the good work…

DANNY O'HARA.

…Thank you, thank you, thank you, PRIVATE EYE… You saved me. I had thought I was the only one who was becoming hysterical and paranoid about the sycophantic wall to wall media coverage of an unfortunate traffic accident…

I. DAVIES.

…Many thanks for the excellent issue "Media to Blame". In a week of national insanity (inanity?), with hypocrisy, humbug and distortion of the truth at every turn, PRIVATE EYE was a lifeline…

DAVID SMITH.

…Thank you, Lord Gnome. You shed a beam of realism into the shocked world of Vanessa, Richard and Judy and Lord Archer. You were a flickering candle in the gloom!!…

WYN THOMAS.

…At last someone has seen fit to print something true. Well done! I haven't bought the EYE for a year or two but I might well be back in the fold now…

DR PETE WELLSBURY.

"What's the correct protocol for modernising the monarchy?"

…I was so pathetically grateful to receive the EYE this morning and read Lord Gnome's editorial. I was worried that he too might succumb to the mass hysteria that has been generated…

MS VEENA KANDHARI.

…It was with great relief that I collected EYE 932 from the hysterical shelves of my local newsagent yesterday.
Thank you, for not losing your marbles unlike it seems the whole of the UK and the rest of the world as we know it. "God Help the Queen"…

ANDY GREEN.

…Thank you, I thought I was losing my mind. I was sure that all the papers and a lot of the public used to slag off Diana but recent events made me think I was wrong. "But you never liked her," I'd say to my work colleagues. "HOW DARE YOU!" they'd yell back. It has been like INVASION OF THE BODYSNATCHERS. Everyone looks human but closer examination reveals that they have been taken over by some strange force that makes them forget anything that happened before 31 August. Thanks for being consistent, the latest edition is true satire…

BEN EDWARDS.

…Am I the only one to be appalled at the sight of the paparazzi lining the route of Princess Diana's funeral cortege?
On the Friday evening the coffin was illuminated by flashes from thousands of cameras and a commentator reported that on the day of the funeral there was the constant clicking sound of shutters as the gun carriage passed through the streets.
Why did the authorities allow these thousands, if not millions, of paparazzi anywhere near the cortege? Surely they were not taken in by their weak disguises as poor distraught mourners?…

GREGG BEAMAN.

…I would like to thank you for your last edition.
I was one of the few people working this morning, as a GP to whose surgery hardly anyone turned up. (Miraculously, Diana still seems to have power to heal the sick!)
Whilst walking through my deserted home town afterwards I bought a copy, and it cheered me up no end.
Your highlighting of some people's hypocrisy (including probably at times my own) was masterful…

CLIVE BARKER.

…Had you been infected by the national Dsychosis I would have been buying my last PRIVATE EYE. But no, you were as brilliantly "tasteless" as ever. With deep thanks…

GRAHAM BAND.

…It is good to know that the EYE has not lost its edge…

CHRISTOPHER SHUTE.

...Please may we share with you our anguished grief over the appalling death on Sunday 31 August 1997 of journalistic objectivity...

THE GRIEVOUS BROS.

...Naughty, naughty, naughty — but what a relief!...

MRS K. TRANTER.

...Thank you for this issue's Lord Gnome (932). Who else will criticise the press; they sure as hell won't do it themselves...

ANON.

...Re: your memorial issue 932 to Diana. Thank you. I thought I was going mad...

CLIVE BRILL.

...At last in a sea of hypocrisy and melodrama, those few citizens choosing not to indulge in the latest fashion, ie that of wallowing in abject self-induced grief and misery, can cling to the last vestige of normality that is PRIVATE EYE*...*

ELENA BLANCO.

...You are to be congratulated for the cover of PRIVATE EYE *issue 932. Furthermore, the Gnome column took the words out of my mouth... At least there is still one magazine in the UK that still writes what it thinks...*

NEIL GALLOP.

...Thank you, thank you for your "Diana" issue (932). Vox sana in dementia publica (sorry if my Latin is rusty). Even my family has been appalled at my heresy, but now I know there are others who can recognise cant. PRIVATE EYE*, I salute your rather solitary fight for honesty...*

HELGA HARRISON.

Lookalike

Winnie **Elton**

Sir,

I wonder whether any of your readers have noticed the striking resemblance between Winnie Mandela and the popular pianist, Elton John, as I have?

Both are mad about football teams and jewellery, so I am sure they must be related in some way.

Yours faithfully,
WILL HAVERCROFT.

Oxford.

...If, like me, you buy PRIVATE EYE *on an occasional basis you may have wondered what's happened to the latest issue. I've tried today to buy it after being told that it was being kept off the shelves by newsagents. Every newsagent I went to said it wasn't being carried as it contained "tasteless" comments about Diana.*

Now far be it from me to get on a soapbox but: 1) People who buy PRIVATE EYE *know that it contains "tasteless" stuff on occasions. 2) The Newsagents seemed to be more than happy to carry the* SUN*, etc when they carried tasteless stuff on Diana before she died. 3) More tasteless than anything has been the fawning and totally false canonisation of Diana by the same papers that were trashing her a few days ago. 4)* PRIVATE EYE *has never paid paparazzi for photos of Di.*

Those who feel like me might like to know that PRIVATE EYE *subscriptions are on: 0171 228 0425...*

MAC SCOTT.

Lookalike

Bernard **Mother**

Sir,

These pictures were on facing pages of today's WESTERN MORNING NEWS*. With such parallel lives and coincidental deaths, do you think they might be related?*

Yours,
NIGEL AYERS,

Cornwall.

...Great cover, brilliant feature on p6. Thanks — what would we do without you...

FRANCES RICKFORD.

...I was appalled and disgusted by the subject matter of your cover of 5 September. Your wholly inappropriate and pathetic attempt at ridiculing the nation's very real and deeply felt grief, plumbs new depths of tastelessness, which for your publication, Sir, is indeed saying something. You leave me with no alternative but to renew my subscription with immediate effect...

MIKE POKORNY.

...I herein enclose my yearly subscription following the latest edition of the EYE *(932).*

Perhaps less time on hypocrisy, mawkish voyeurism, and more time spent in quiet reflection on the loss of a mother, sister, daughter and even friend may well have given the events some much needed dignity.

Perhaps having been informed by the media in general and the tabloids in particular how to vote, shop, watch, listen, etc, the country now needs to be told how to mourn...

TERRY STONE.

...I thought your cover "Media to Blame" perhaps the most appropriate and certainly one of the funniest ever...

DR D.A. SMITH.

Mediaballs

£10 paid for contributions

Dermot Murnaghan: *When did you hear of the death?*
Penny Junor: *5am — when you phoned me.*
ITN
(Roger Pearce)

Paul Reynolds: *What did he [Prince Philip] say to you?*
Person in Crowd: *He asked me where I was from.*
Paul Reynolds: *And where are you from?*
Person in Crowd: *Malaysia.*
Paul Reynolds: *So what did you say to him?*
Person in Crowd: *I said "I am from Malaysia."*
Radio 5 Live
(Trevor Sparks)

"The Queen's speech today is unprecedented, but just how unprecedented is it?"
HOWARD HUGHES, Capital FM
(Rupert Higgins)

"...The Queen Mother, 97 years old on 4th August. A day she hoped she would never see..."
Sky News
(Andrew Nicole)

Interviewer: *How would Diana like to be remembered?*
Dr David Hope: *I think she would like to be remembered for the ordinary — er — but extraordinary person which she was.*
Radio 4
(Anon)

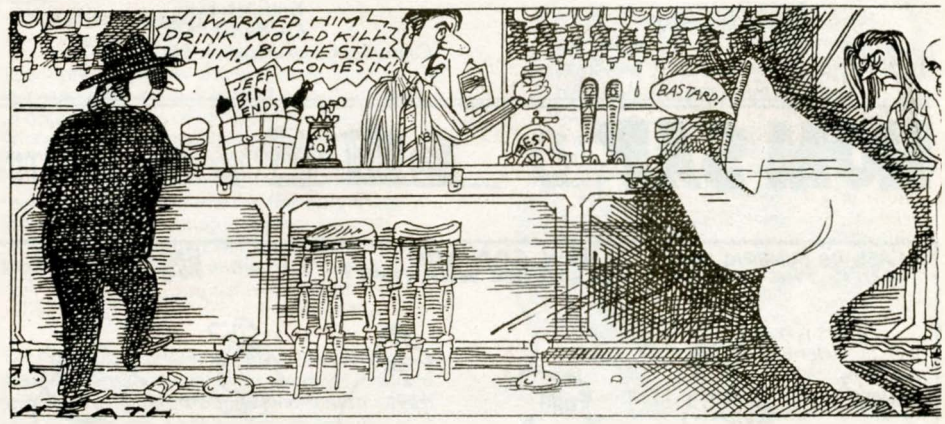
"Just before we go — Diana. It spells 'an aid' backwards. Something to think about on this sad morning."
FIONA PHILLIPS, GMTV
(P. Vickers)

Peter Sissons: *Which issue do you think was closest to Diana's heart?*
Jenny Bond: *It was with the landmines issue that she really found her feet.*
BBC News
(B O'Connor)

"And let's not forget the other people in this tragedy — such as Dodi, whose death seems to have taken a back seat this week."
ANNA FORD, BBC
(P. Vickers)

The Regulars

HEATH



Unpublished, prophetic, strip cartoon from 1987.

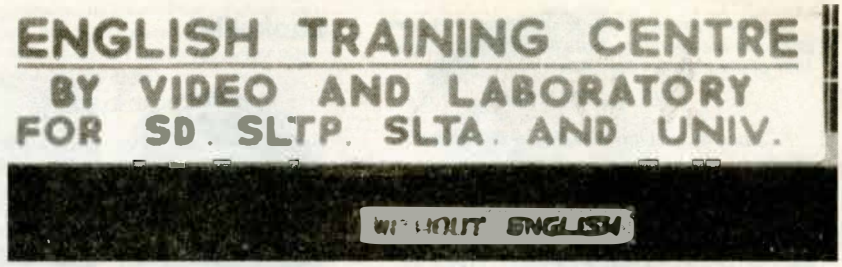
Jeff Bernard ('Colonel Mad') wrote the Eye's Sporting Life column from 1977 to 1980, and contributed occasional pieces after that date.

Other Letters

Private Eye

I-SPY

South Sulawesi, Indonesia



Submitted by Angela Spilsbury. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Pircs & Spencer

Sir,

You published an article about Marks & Spencer and myself (dated 22 August) and subsequently had a response from our PR department, which unfortunately did not clarify the procedures we followed in order to obtain approval for our new share option scheme.

The chairman of the remuneration committee, and the non-executive members of that committee, wrote to the ten largest institutional investors and the two leading bodies who represent the investment industry, the ABI and NAPF, in November 1996 outlining our proposals.

Over subsequent months there were many discussions and exchanges of view, both verbal and written, which resulted in the criteria set for exercising these share options being amongst the "toughest" demanded of any major UK company. As a result the proposal went to the AGM with the support of **1½ billion shares** *and the total approval of ABI and NAPF.*

This process and the support of the institutions is considerably more valuable than that of PIRC, a publicity seeking organisation, who do not own one single share in the company.

Yours sincerely,
SIR RICHARD GREENBURY,
London W1.

● *The famous Greenbury eye for detail appears to have overlooked PIRC's shareholding certificate No 1531608 purchased proudly in Nov 1993 and still held today.*

Helpful note: filed under P for PIRC.

Feather light-entertainer

Sir,

I have never been a fan of BIRDS OF A FEATHER *but, at the risk of being awarded the OBN, I must rush to the defence of its creators.*

A couple of weeks ago, after a performance in Edinburgh of my one-man show THINK NO EVIL OF US: MY LIFE WITH KENNETH WILLIAMS, *I was surprised to find myself being warmly congratulated by Laurence Marks and Maurice Gran themselves. They were extremely enthusiastic, and invited me to join them that evening at the George Hotel.*

There I was introduced by Mr Marks, with embarrassingly effusive words of praise, to all the important televisionaries of the day. After that they treated me to a sumptuous dinner, during which they laughed at all my jokes, and let it be known that I was their guest of honour.

All that for me, a relatively obscure fringe performer. So they cannot be all bad.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID BENSON,
Edinburgh.

A Klaus call

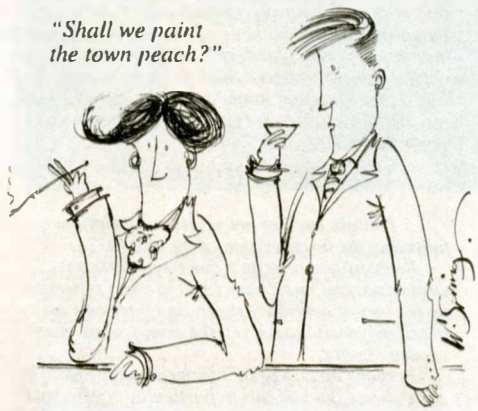
Sir,

In HP Sauce in this week's issue (5 September) you refer to Klaus Kinkel as "[the] socialist leader", presumably meaning that he is the leader of the SPD (Sozialdemocratische Partei Deutschlands) — the German equivalent of the Labour Party.

Klaus Kinkel is the foreign minister and the leader of the Free Democratic Party — Germany's rough equivalent of the Liberal Democrats — one of the three parties that make up Helmut Kohl's coalition government.

Oskar Lafontaine is the current leader of the SPD.

Yours germanically,
GERARD SUGRUE,
Chineham, Hants.



Snow job

Sir,

You write a lot of drivel in Media News which we mostly ignore. But to suggest — as you did in your issue of Friday 5 September — that BBC News chief executive Tony Hall axed Peter Snow, is a travesty. The two have been professional colleagues for years and Snow will continue to do some work for BBC News as well as presenting TOMORROW'S WORLD. *Incidentally, it was* TOMORROW'S WORLD *who approached Peter to do the job.*

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD PEEL,
Controller Communication, BBC News.

Canon fodder

Sir,

*Piloti, like Pontius, displays a scant regard for truth. He suggests (*EYE *5 September) that the Church of England wishes to close St Ninian's Church. This is not true; St Ninian's is a proprietary chapel, owned and run by proprietors who have allowed the "devoted congregation" to become part of another ecclesial body ("The Continuing Church of England"). Far from wishing to close the church, the Parochial Church Council seeks the archbishop's licence to be removed from the building so that the worship and ministry there is no longer contrary to canon law.*

As a rather staid and conservative chap (not at all a "happy-clappy"), I share Piloti's love of buildings. We are currently preparing for an appeal to restore St Mary's and St Hilda's. I look forward to receiving a substantial sum from Piloti — cheques should be made payable to "Whitby PCC". Or is Piloti one of those damned nuisances who wax lyrical about church buildings but who do little to support their upkeep?

Yours sincerely,
REV MICHAEL AISBITT,
Rector of Whitby.

Cereal births

Sir,

*Re: Folic Acid and Pregnancy, (*EYE *930 and G. Martin's letter* EYE *932). I have just given birth to my fifth child. Each successful pregnancy was preceded by a three-month course of folic acid tablets before conception. I have also had four miscarriages on which occasions I had not taken any folic acid at all. Draw your own conclusions. Incidentally, an obstetrician told me of the importance of taking folic acid for three months before conception back in 1985. I've been telling women ever since. It is always news to them although I notice that Kellogg's use the folic acid content as a selling point on the side of their packets of Special K.*

Best wishes,
FENELLA JACKSON,
Via e-mail.

Mourning news

Sir,

I was saddened and distressed to read your article relating to the tragic and premature death of Councillor Phil Kordun in last week's EYE *(5 Sep).*

I can only assume that like the gutter press, you are seeking to exploit the unfortunate death of an individual to promote your own paper and its views. The view that there is a parallel between Renfrewshire and Hillingdon is both unsustainable and unjustifiable.

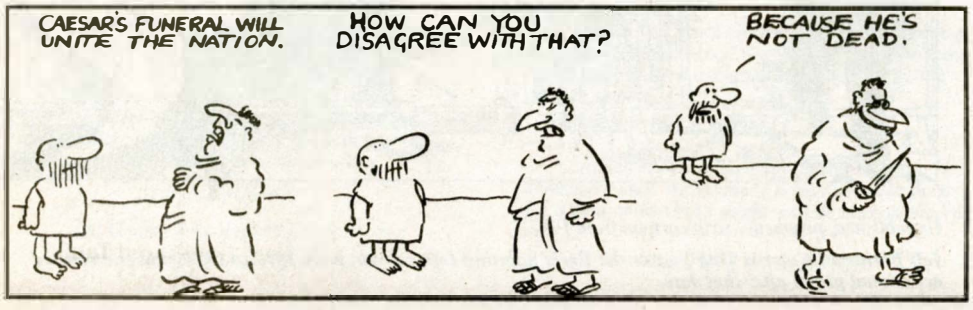
The circumstances surrounding Phil's death were personal and private and not connected to his political position in any way. There is no investigation being carried out by the Hillingdon Labour Group or the Constituency Labour Party as there is no reason for one.

The only investigation will be the inquest whose decision you appear to have pre-empted. Our sympathies and thoughts are with Stella and his family and friends at this difficult time.

Yours faithfully,
CLLR. P.K. HARMSWORTH,
Leader of the Council, Ward Councillor for Yiewsley.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



NOOKS and CORNERS

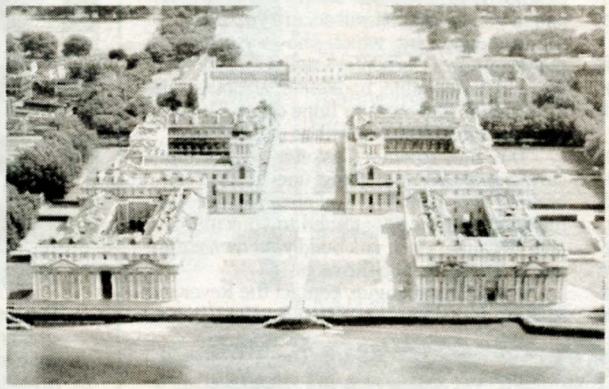
COME the wretched millennium Lord Rogers' large plastic dome will not be the only thing at Greenwich worth seeing. After all, in the old part of the town there are, among other things, buildings by Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Nicholas Hawksmoor and other quite famous architects who, though they conspicuously lacked Richard Rogers' relaxed charm and enthusiasm for new technology, didn't do too badly.

In fact Greenwich consists of a remarkable concentration of major historic buildings. The Royal Naval Hospital by Wren is the grandest and most spectacular set-piece of monumental Classical architecture in Britain.

At present the public can see the Painted Hall and "Athenian" Stuart's rebuilt chapel in the hospital. So will more be on show at the millennium? Well, no. In fact it is not at all clear what these buildings will be used for then thanks to years of devious and shambolic maladministration by the last government.

As an interesting leaked ministry of defence memorandum concludes: "It is clear that the MoD now wishes to discharge all interests in the Greenwich site well before it runs the risk of falling under the millennium spotlight. In so doing, it is quietly overseeing the hurried dissolution of the fabric and integrity of one of the nation's most historic sites, as well as committing it to a most uncertain future."

Curious how reluctant Mr Blair's government is to reverse the more stupid plans of its predecessor — not just the silly dome but also the misguided decisions over buildings used by the armed forces and the MoD. The National Audit Office (NAO) report recently criticised the maladministration involved in selling and leasing-back officers' married quarters all over Britain, but the costs involved there are as nothing compared with the price of the projected Joint Services Command & Staff College now to be built at a cost of £500m — by private finance initiative, naturally — at Shrivenham, when the government already owns a perfectly serviceable and rather better sited complex of buildings at Greenwich which would cost a mere tenth of that to upgrade and expand.



But Michael Portillo, the former defence secretary, seemed to care neither for Thatcherite good housekeeping nor for the nation's historic buildings. These days he postures on the BBC's *One Foot in the Past* as an aesthete, deeply in love with our heritage: in office he was quite happy to dispose of not only the Admiralty Arch but also the Royal Naval Hospital. And never mind the consequences.

Why? Because some four years ago civil servants decided to merge three staff colleges — Bracknell (RAF), Camberley (army) and Greenwich (navy) — on one site. The best option, by far, was the Royal Naval Hospital, which would cost some £11m to upgrade while use could also have been made of the adjacent (listed) 18th century Dreadnought Seamens' Hospital and Edwin Cooper's (listed) Nurses' Home. But the army fought against this, claiming that to live in south-east London would be a "severe disadvantage". Poor things! Result: a decision to develop a new college at Camberley. Never mind that the Royal Naval College had to vacate buildings at Greenwich used by the navy for 300 years.

But, oh dear, it was then discovered that the buildings at Camberley were so contaminated with asbestos they would have to be rebuilt at a cost of £50m. So instead it was decided to create a purely *temporary* tri-service college at RAF Bracknell at a cost of more than £14m (more than converting Wren's buildings) while a whizzy new college will be built at the army's Royal College of Military Science at Shrivenham — far from London. Cost: £500m; and it will be built *and owned* by a development consortium (Laing plc & Serco plc) and leased to the MoD.

So what will happen to the magnificent buildings at Greenwich which the nation actually owns? The National Maritime Museum only wants part of the site, while the so-called Greenwich University — one of Mrs Thatcher's jumped-up polytechnics — is not an ideal tenant and will not be allowed to use the Painted Hall. As for the (curiously unconsecrated) chapel, the diocese of Southwark doesn't want anything so beautiful, so the congregation must go. But whatever happens, the government (ie the taxpayer) will still have to pay for the maintenance of these superb grade I listed historic buildings. They would of course have made an ideal place for officers in London to live instead of expensive private rented accommodation, but that option was not pursued. So one of the finest groups of buildings in Europe is redundant.

Three centuries of naval records and historic artefacts are now being taken away — where to? — while a flood in the basement under the library has recently damaged old books and records. Who cares? The leaked MoD memorandum talks of "political short-sightedness and intransigence, atrociously bad management by the MoD and, moreover, widespread irresponsibility in protecting the heritage". Quite. But never mind: we can all console ourselves with the sheer beauty of the Millennium Dome (cost £800m and rising).

'Piloti'

Pseuds Corner SPECIAL

Think of it this way. The object of desire, the Beauty, the Blonde (Diana), is repeatedly subjected to the unwelcome attentions of a persistent suitor (the Camera) until the dashing, glamorous knight (riding his Automobile) sweeps her away. The Camera, with its unavoidably phallic long-lensed snout, gives pursuit. And the story reaches its tragic climax, for the Automobile is driven not by a hero but by a clumsy drunk. Put not your trust in fairy tales or chivalrous knights. The object of desire, in the moment of her death, sees the phallic lenses advancing upon her, snapping, snapping. Think of it this way, and the pornography of Diana Spencer's death becomes apparent. She died in a sublimated sexual assault.

SALMAN RUSHDIE
New Yorker

No. It was the first word of that cataclysmic Sunday morning: "no" pronounced through an ascending sob, the consonant left behind in the chest voice as the vowel climbed into the head voice, the pure wail of lament whereby anyone, no matter how tone deaf, for one terrible moment becomes a singer. But there was not one terrible moment. There were, still are, hundreds of them, joining up in a long aria of anguish interrupted only by exhaustion. Hundreds of millions of people who loved her but never met her must be crying like this. Those who did meet her, and knew her faults, should have some detachment. But somehow it works in reverse. The physics of this unprecedented metaphysical explosion, this starburst of regret, are counterintuitive, like relativity.

CLIVE JAMES
New Yorker

Tomorrow, the globe will stop spinning in panic, and I will stop feeling so dizzy with grief. Tomorrow, a sister will be officially handed over to the impatient authority of death. Here, among the living, some would have gladly gone instead of her... Tomorrow, the people will queue and queue not for bread, but to pay their respects to a woman who gave us something else to live on; the dream that one person can make a difference. Diana provided the food of the soul.

ANVAR KHAN
The Herald

The more you know she was never perfect, the less you, who are not perfect either, are able to detach the loss of her from the loss of yourself, and so you have gone down with her, down that Acherontic tunnel by the Pont de l'Alma and into the Halls of Dis, the inane regions, where loneliness is the only thing there is, and the lost are together but can never find each other, because it is like looking for a shadow in the dark.

CLIVE JAMES
New Yorker

The Panorama interview was much more than a blatantly partisan account of her marriage; it marked her invention, at a stroke, of a new and multi-faceted identity for herself. Appropriating the language of such disparate discourses as traditional romance, psychotherapy and even feminism, she had succeeded in reaching out to the broadest of all possible constituencies... What Diana seemed to have forgotten, and most people were too dazzled by her performance to recall, was the traditional fate of the women with whom she had chosen to bracket herself. Clytemnestra, Medea, Phaedra, Sophonisba, Dido, Lucretia, Desdemona, Madame Butterfly, Violetta, Norma, Mimi, even twentieth-century heroines like Maria from West Side Story: they all wind up young, beautiful and dead.

JOAN SMITH
Observer

CONTRIBUTORS: Everyone, Andrew Gilchrist, Glyn Johnson, Everyone.

£10 paid for entries

What if we hold a chariot boot sale in the Druids' Garden next week-end? I bet we'd raise lots of cash for local charities...
HUNTER

King Arthur and the Round Table (West Mercia Branch)

FUNNY OLD WORLD

O "I was just an ordinary man, but I was also very spiritual. I was deep into the occult" General Butt Naked told reporters in the headquarters of his Soul-Winning Evangelistic Ministry in Monrovia. "Thanks to God, I am no longer a slave to Satan, but when I think of how I used to make human sacrifices before going into battle, yes I feel very bad, so, so bad."

General Butt Naked, who now uses his birth name of Joshua Milton Blahyi, was recalling his role as leader of the Butt Naked Battalion during Liberia's civil war, in which a quarter of a million people died. "At the age of eleven, I had a telephone call from the Devil, who demanded nudity on the battlefield, acts of indecency, and regular human sacrifices to ensure my protection. So, before leading my troops into battle, we would get drunk and drugged up, and then I would go in search

of a teenager. Usually I would enter the water where teenagers were playing, dive under the surface, grab one, carry him off under my arm, and then break his neck. Sometimes I'd cause accidents. Sometimes I'd just slaughter the first person I saw.

"After drinking their blood, we would all strip down to our shoes, and then waltz into battle wearing colourful wigs and carrying dainty purses we'd looted from civilians. We would slaughter anyone we saw, and sometimes we'd cut off their heads and use them for soccer practice. We were nude, fearless, drunk, and homicidal. We killed hundreds of people, so many that I lost count. But in June of last year, God telephoned me and told me that I was not the hero I considered myself to be, so I stopped and became a preacher. Please help me to atone for my past by buying a cassette of my sermons. $20, all major credit cards accepted." *(Associated Press, 4/8/97. Spotter: Professor Stephen Reucroft)*

—O—

O "Why spend $10,000 on a velvet-lined coffin-only casket, especially if you'll only use it once? Instead, why not treat yourself to one of my economical Carpenter Caskets and enjoy a lifetime of pleasure?

"Imagine having fine furniture in your living room, specially designed so that, when the time comes for you to face the final frontier of death, the shelves can simply be pulled out and in you go. $19.95 will secure you a copy of my instruction kit, which shows you how to build your own Carpenter Casket that can double as a coffee table, bookshelf, armoire, television table, foot stool, or hope chest. The total cost, including lumber, will be under $300.

"But the Carpenter Casket is not just about saving money and owning fine furniture. By crafting your own box, you also become spiritually and physically attuned to your ultimate fate. Because, when you build your own coffin, you're forced to face the facts.

"For a full catalogue, contact the Reverend Richard Johnstone, Southern Baptist Church, Pioneer, California. No time wasters." *(The New York Times, 30/7/97. Spotter: Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)*

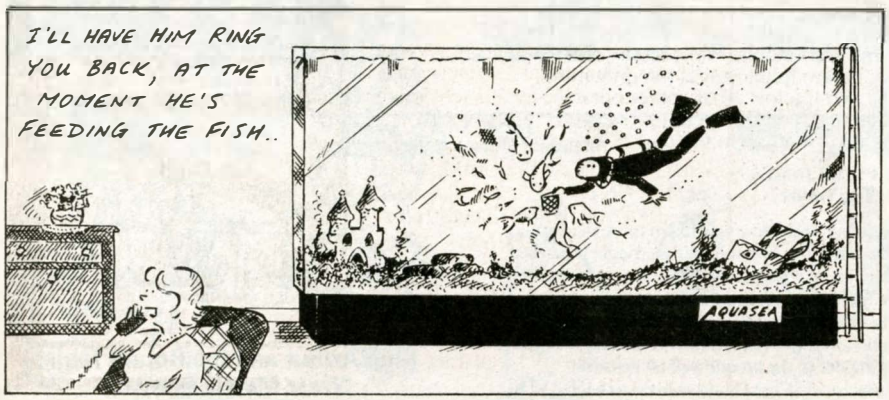
—O—

O *"Really, it's a question of respect for the deceased and their relatives," said Baptist Pastor Lennart Nilsson, protesting against plans by a Swedish crematorium to burn corpses for use as fuel. "I know that the crematorium in Boras has been providing heat for local restaurants for the past six months, but we here in Helsingborg think differently. After all, on a cold November day, recently bereaved relatives might feel awkward about Aunt Astrid being used to heat up their house. It may be environmentally sound, but it isn't polite."* (Reuters, 29/7/97. Spotter: Anon.)

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

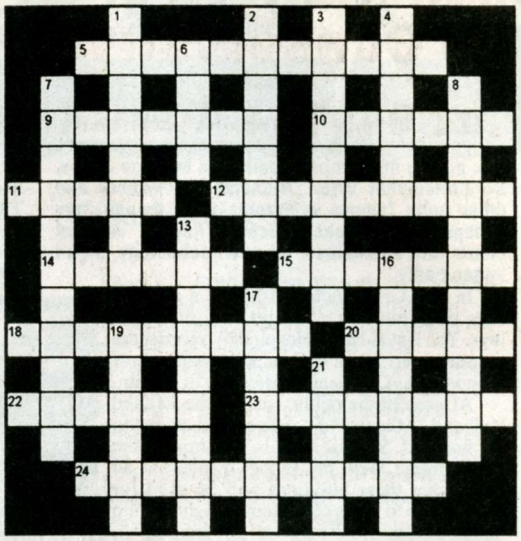
The Lottery Winners

TURNER



EYE CROSSWORD 88

by Cyclops *£100 prize*



ACROSS

5 The repeated shafting of somebody is a common practice of accountants (6,5)
9 Solicitor Patterson boils (7)
10 Breakfast container, for example, copper shoved inside doctor (6)
11 Like Nick, ready for it? (5)
12 Being more unfeeling, figure it's not big enough for the Blairs (6,3)
14 Stage act appearing to titillate (4,2)
15 What Charles and co. do at Klosters with Roger: it helps one go down spectacularly (3-4)
18 Aroused or just expectant? (7,2)
20/7 Something taken by chance — by the publicity-seeking politician? (5-11)
22 One looking to be a big name on tv programme? (6)
23 Live-in scatty Fergie's no good handouts (8)
24 'Plonker together with Wogan' — long the sort of story peddled to the tabloids (4,3,4)

DOWN

1 General mounts Brenda — but he's not her type at all (8)
2 Get tight and see the Future possibly on a high? (5,2)
3 Tebbit-type vulgar exhortation to motivate oneself (2,3,4)
4 A former leading South African king on carpet with Brenda (6)
6 A tosser's target (4)
7 (see 20)
8 Royal and Ancient? Certainly a public institution now (5,6)
13 Looking for sexual stimulation? (9)
16 Major load of bollocks as a national symbol? (4,4)
17 Sort of bird taking a lot of money to get you breathing heavily (7)
19 Wow! Soldiers often stroked by Brenda? (6)
21 Rich man, but occupying only part of celebrated US address (5)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 26.9.97. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 87

Winner: SHEILA WRIGHT

ACROSS: 7 Consul 8 Exposed 10/14 St Albion Parish News 11 Winnie 12 Big Mac 13 Copulate 15 Red Army 17 Tristar 20 Iron Duke 22 Smarmy 24 Agassi 26 Genitals 27 Royal We 28 Wreath.

DOWN: 1 Doctrine 2 Asylum 3 Plaid Cymru 4 Red-neck 5 Spew 6 Addict 9 Singles 14 (see 10) 16 Amnesty 18 Armalite 19 Beagles 21 Rogers 23 Attlee 25 Ills.

TV Highlights

Alan Clark's History of the Conservative Party

Part 94: The Alan Clark Years

(Shot of man in agreeable suit standing on top of agreeable castle)

Clark *(for it is he)*: What could be more agreeable than this agreeable castle? Yet it was here that the seeds were sown of the destruction of the entire conservative party.

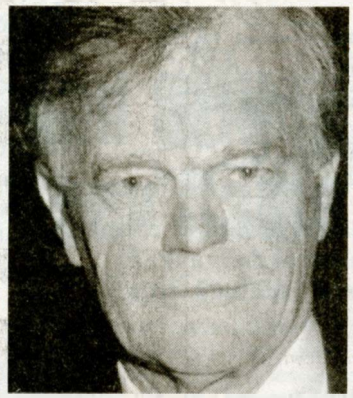
(Elgar-style music plays over black and white film of John Major being stumped during cricket match on village green in Brixton)

Clark: This hopeless little bank manager with his ghastly voice and ill-fitting underwear from Marks and Spencer was quite unfit to step into the shoes of Winston Thatcher. Surely the leader the party so desperately needed was this man? *(Hallelujah Chorus plays over black-and-white footage of Alan Clark chasing female BBC researcher in tight skirt round castle. Man in glasses appears with caption "Political Historian. Please don't switch off")*

Historian *(for it is he)*: Alan Clark had all the qualities to make him a first-class Prime Minister. He was charismatic, clever, wealthy and owned a large castle. Is that OK, Alan? Or shall I do it again?

(Cut back to Clark striding around countryside with rottweiler carrying BBC journalist's leg in its mouth)

Clark: Clark's finest hour came when he single-handedly defied his own government's guidelines by selling huge amounts of arms to Saddam Hussein. *(Holst-style music plays over film of Gulf War showing British soldiers under attack from British missiles. Cut back to Clark who goes off script and begins to foam at mouth)* And would you believe it, all the bloody pinkos and nig-nogs and chaps who didn't go to Eton made a bloody stink about it and brought down the whole government. *(Clark goes back to script after*



producer hits him over head with bottle of Mouton Rothschild 47) This defeat allowed into power the greatest Conservative of them all — Tony Blair.

(Cut to Lord Deedes sitting in Canary Wharf playing Nintendo Golf Boy)

Deedes: I first met Disraeli in 1832. I had just become a cub reporter on *The Empire Clarion (continued for several weeks)*

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam Sir Georg Solti, Jeffrey Bernard, Mother Teresa, General Sir John Hackett, President Mobutu, Hans Eysenck, Burgess Meredith

So. Farewell
Then.
All of the
Above.

Unfortunately there
Is not sufficient
Space

To write a
Poem about
You.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

A collection of Thribb's Laments for the late Princess of Wales entitled "So. Farewell Then Princess Diana" will be published shortly. A large percentage of the royalties will be given to the poet.

Autumn Books

Had Enough Yet? by Nicola Borlick

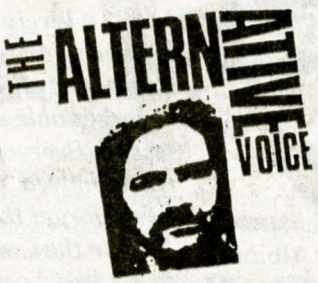
THE incredible true-life story of a woman who works in a bank, has some children and still finds time to write a book about how marvellous she is.
Macmillions,
999 pages, £25.99
(Serialised in the Daily Telegraph and all other tabloid papers.)

I Was Better Than Spiggy by Sir Paul Macitallupney

The former Turd tells in his own words how brilliant he was and how everyone else in the group was useless, especially Spiggy Topes, even though he wrote all the hits including "I'm a Red Hot Swinging Perve".
Sackem and Gasbag, 999 pages, £37.99

She's Writing Another One by Edwina Karaoke

The best-selling author has come up with an original new novel about a brilliant young sexy Jewish girl called Edina who goes to university and ends up as a brilliant, middle-aged sexy Jewish novelist called Bedwina who *(That's enough Edwina. Ed.)*
Littlesales & Boring,
999 pages, 1p



Every week **Dave Spart**, co-chair of the Crouch End Branch of the Republicans For Diana Movement, writes on the story behind the news.

THE Floral Revolution will totally go down in history as the most important display of the power of the British proletariat against the entrenched forces of the capitalist Establishment since the... er... Royal Wedding... and, er... there can only be one conclusion to the stunning victory of the masses over the reactionary monarcho-fascists of the Windsor family, ie that the sickening so-called Royal Family is totally and utterly finished and that a new political era has been born out of the ashes of the old coalition of aristocratic landed interest and, er... Earl Spencer spoke for the entire working class when he said that the Windsor dynasty was totally doomed and if proof were needed of that verdict the massed voices of the ordinary people sang "God Save The Queen" er... *(continued page 94)*

St Cakes School

Diana Term begins today. As a mark of respect there are 149 boys in the school and 174 girls. As another mark of respect this announcement has been curtailed as any advertisement of the school's activities in the coming term has been deemed inappropriate by the Board of Governors (chairman Lord Crocodile O.C.). There will be a daily performance of "Candle in the Wind" (Words B. Taupin, Music E. John) in the chapel. It has also been agreed that the school should be re-dedicated as The Princess Diana Independent School for Boys and Girls (Formerly St Cakes). The following masters have been entered in the Paedophile Register: Mr R.C. Mackintosh, Rev P.J. Internet, and Major C.C.F. Gropelad.

Flag stolen

THIEVES stole a Union flag which was flying at half mast outside a police station in Lyndhurst, Hants, as a mark of respect for Diana.

Aberdeen Press & Journal

FORD GRANADA 2.0I GHIA 1986, Silver, 12 months MoT, vgc, any trial, 1 previous owner, service history £875

Western & S. Wales Auto Trader

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hullo!

Well, what a sad week it's been! Some of our older parishioners have told me how sad people were when King George VI and Mr Churchill passed over.

But, with due respect, surely no one has ever been as sad as we all have been in the past sad few days!

We have all lost a really close friend, even though none of us had ever met her.

But we all know she stood for all the things that the team ministry at St Albion's is working towards: compassion, caring for the disadvantaged, the abolition of landmines and, above all, a refreshing wind of change.

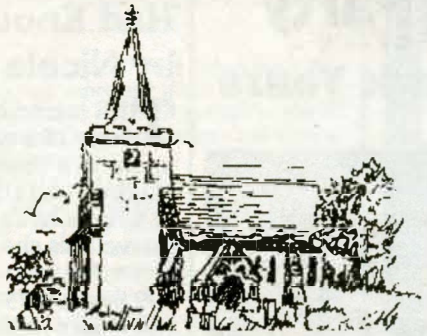
She stood out against all the old-fashioned, stuffy values which have so often held us all back over the years.

She was informal and in touch with ordinary people, especially the young, the old and the middle-aged.

No wonder she was so popular and won the hearts of so many people — reformers often do, you know!

None of us will ever forget the special service which I organised at St Albion's to give thanks for her life as what I call "the People's Princess".

It is not for me to single out what was



the highlight of our service, but I will merely quote from one of the hundreds of letters we have received from parishioners.

"Dear Vicar:

May I just say how moved we all were by the service today. Everything was so well organised, from the flowers and the choir's singing to the coffee in the vestry afterwards. (Well done, Cherie, who looked lovely at the service without a hat — a lovely informal touch!) But if I had to choose the most moving moment of all, it was the unforgettable way you read the lesson. Everyone could tell you were really moved, and I for one will never forget the immortal words of St Paul to the Corinthians about love being like a candle in the wind.

Well done, Tony! Although we have lost Diana, we still have you, Tony, to make sure that the candle is kept alight in the wind!

Yours sincerely,
P. MANDELSON,
Churchwarden.

PS. I have sent a copy of this letter to all members of the PCC so that they can add their names to it"

Thanks, Peter! But the reality of the situation is that, as it says in the Bible, "every cloud has a silver lining" *(Ephesians 3.23)* and "it is always darkest just before the dawn" *(Matthew 8.11)*.

Out of all this grief and sorrow, I think we all feel that a new spirit has emerged. So, let's all go forward together, to build the kind of compassionate, caring world that Diana and I were working towards.

Yours at this sad but joyful time,

Tony

A Prayer For The Royal Family

We remember in our prayers at this time the Royal Family as they strive to come to terms with their grief. May they realise that they have to modernise if they are to play a meaningful role in years to come. And we thank God that they are at last blessed with wise counsellors who can tell them what to do and how to handle the media.

AMEN.

THE PEOPLES VICAR!

Grief Line

A SPECIAL TELEPHONE counselling service has been organised for all parishioners who need to talk through their feelings of bereavement over Diana. Just dial the normal vicarage number and press the # button. You will then hear a recording of the vicar reading from Corinthians.

Verses By A Local Poet

Flowers on the concrete.
Flowers on the railings.
Flowers on the M1.
Flowers everywhere.

T. Hughes,
Poet in Residence,
Language Studies Department,
St Albion's Secondary.

Suggestion Box

I think it would be a good idea if in future we had a new Bank Holiday to be called "Diana Day". It could replace the old Labour Day on May 1st, which is increasingly out of date in the modern world.

G. Brown

(Nice one, Gordon! TB)

Talking Point

"Vengeance is mine", saith the Lord Spencer.

Well Done!

Our congratulations to **Angela Eagle** who has announced her lesbianism. Everyone in the parish is delighted for Angela, and we wish her and her partner all the best in their new life together in the open!

DID THE PRESS OVERKILL DIANA?

A special 94 page special by our Infill Team led by Phil Space

WERE newspapers guilty of hounding the Diana story to death in order to make money for themselves?

This is the question that must be urgently addressed by the press — particularly in the light of new evidence that has emerged in the last two weeks.

- **The papers were far too fast in bringing out memorial issues and were recklessly pursuing any angle in order to fill the pages.**
- **One reporter was going at 120 pieces a week. He was out of control and probably drunk. He should never have been in charge of a wordprocessor.**
- **Even when the story was clearly dying, journalists kept on taking pictures and writing features.**
- **The press deliberately impeded efforts to get over the tragedy by carrying on with their business.**

The case against the newspapers is overwhelming and newspaper editors have been told they must put their house in order.

"We have learned our lesson," said one chastened Fleet Street veteran. "We are all guilty of doing this story to death. We all have money on our hands."

And Still They Came

by Phillipa Column

It is now a week since the funeral and still they come. Tribute after tribute piles up in the newspapers as from all over the country thousands of columnists are moved to offer their views on the death of the Princess. Most of the pieces are short 1,000-word messages — and they are delivered by young and old alike. Many are badly written, hastily put together and childish in their sentiments. But they all asked the same unanswerable question, "Is this enough?".

And Still They Came

It is now a week and a day since the first few pieces began to appear at the front of the paper, but the tide of words shows no sign of abating. The air is heavy with the smell of humbug as the flowery prose mounts up at *(continued on all other pages for 94 days)*

Jeff Bernard
A nation mourns

by **David Dimbleby, Trevor Macdonald, Will Hutton, Richard Kay, Paul Dack, Andrew Marr, Ben Pimlott, Jeffrey Archer, Paul Johnson, Alan Rusbridger, John Simpson, Lord Archer, Lady Antonia Holden, Penny Junor, Hugo Vickers, Lord St John of Fawsley, Lord Blake, Stephen Glover, Ann Leslie, Anne McElvoy, Anne Appelbaum, Claire Rayner, Dr Thomas Stuttaford, Dr Raj Persaud, Lynda Lee-Potter, Charles Moore** and the **Staff of the Daily Hellograph** *(That's enough names. Ed).*

Jeff Bernard is dead.

The very words seem unreal.

As we write, it is impossible to take in the sheer enormity of what has happened.

In years to come everyone will remember exactly where they were when they heard the news that Jeff Bernard was no more.

There has never been a moment in history like it.

As the news sank in, millions of ordinary people flocked to his official residence in the heart of London, the Coach and Horses, Soho, to pay their last respects.

In the street outside, a mighty carpet of empty bottles stretched hundreds of yards in every direction, as a wordless tribute to the man they called simply "The People's Pisshead".

One man I spoke to was speechless, so overcome was he by the heady fumes of a thousand vodka bottles.

"I cannot speak," he said. "Jeff had the common touch. It was common for him to touch anyone in sight for the price of a gin and tonic..."

Meanwhile, the jukebox in the Coach and Horses was quietly playing the song by Elton John specially adapted in special tribute to the most loved and revered figure the pub has ever known.

A Taxi Driver writes

Every week a well-known cabbie is invited to comment on an issue of topical importance. This week: **The Earl Spencer** (Capetown Cab No. 14325)

They got a nerve, that Royal Family, eh guv? Taking her title away like that. Not that it did her any harm. She was better than the whole lot of them put together, if you ask me. Tell you one thing though. It's them boys I feel sorry for. Fancy being stuck with that lot as family. Not to mention the pappa-wotzits and all the other so-called press. They killed her. No mistake. Blood on their hands, that's what I say. And I know what I'm talking about. I used to do a bit of that for the American telly before I came to South Africa and got my cab. You can make a lot of money in that game, Bastards. They should all be strung up, to my mind.

A copy of the above address, originally given from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey, is available in a limited edition from the Table Mountain Press, SA 3046.

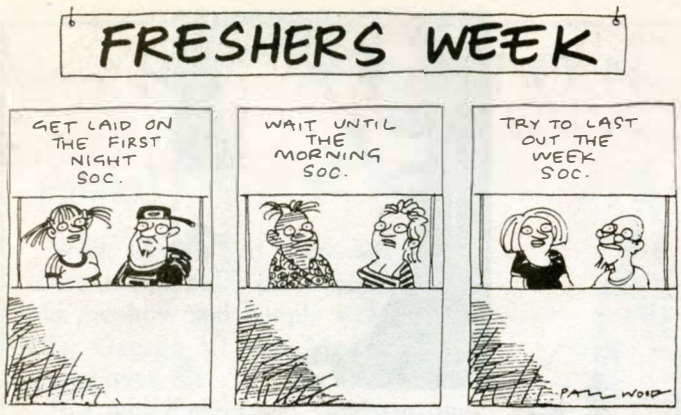
Canned In The Pub

by Elton John Thribb

So. Goodbye Jeff Bernard
You were always in the pub.
But sometimes you were barred,
And couldn't get your grub.

And it seemed to me you lived your life
Like a candle on the bar
When there's been a power cut
And no one can see where they are.

Goodbye Jeff Bernard
You will be forever missed
In England's green and pleasant pubs
You were always pissed.



Yes! It's Britain's Newest Fanzine

BLAIRZONE

Hey — Blairzone are proud to announce that they are releasing a tribute album this Christmas in honour of the late Princess Diana. Tony was a great personal friend and she was a great fan of his. So let nobody say that Tony and the boys are trying to hijack public sentiment to make themselves more popular. Blairzone don't do that sort of thing. They are simply the biggest bandwagon in history. 'Nuff said.

Trax on that Album

Bandwagon On The Run
All You Need Is Love (and faith and hope)
In The (Public) Mood
Here, Blair And Everywhere
Candle Knows Which Way The Wind Is Blowing

Thought For The Day

▶ *"I wanna, I wanna, I wanna, I wanna, I wanna, really, really, really wanna zigazig ha."*
Makes you think?
(Thanks to the late, great Spice Girls)

Tony Poll

▶ Is Tony now more popular than everyone, including God? You decide!

Replies (Yes) to Blairzone Fanzine, EMAP House, Unit 4, Winnersh Trading Estate, Sutton.

SCOTTISH TOUR NOW ON!
Blairzone will be supported by Yes, Yes

An Apology from Mr Michael Cole, the official spokesman to the House of Al Fayed

WHEN I informed the world's media last week that the late M. Henri Paul was a hand-picked, highly-experienced, expertly-trained chauffeur of the very highest integrity, professional competence and reliability, who had never been known to touch a drink, I may have given the impression that M. Paul was in some way a suitable driver to conduct the late Diana, Princess of Wales, from the Ritz Hotel, Paris, to the late Mr Dodi Fayed's apartment.

I now realise that M. Paul was a drunken, drugged-up, "fuggin' scumbag" (to use the vernacular phrase of my employer Mr Al Fayed) and I personally would like to spit on his grave.

I would like to offer my deepest and most heartfelt apologies to anyone who believes anything I say.

© Michael Dole, as of tomorrow.

STORM GROWS OVER HINDLEY PICTURE

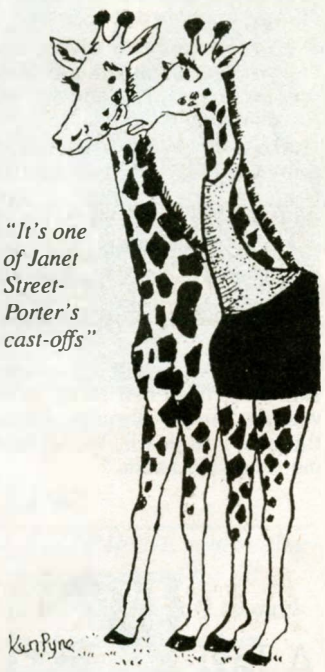
by Our Art Correspondent
R. Sewell

THE ART WORLD was rocked to its foundations yesterday when the Royal Academy put on show a new picture of the Moors Murderer Myra Hindley.

The work, by the little-known nonagenarian artist Frank Longford, shows Hindley as a saintly figure being received into heaven, surrounded by angels.

Says artist Longford, "I have tried to show Myra as I see her, a woman purified by suffering who should be released from prison at once."

Lord Longford is 106.



"It's one of Janet Street-Porter's cast-offs"

Celeb

LIGGER

THE MOST UPSETTING PART OF DIANA'S FUNERAL FOR ME, WAS ELTON SINGING "CANDLE IN THE WIND..."
TEARS WELLED UP IN MY EYES AND I HATE TO ADMIT IT BUT I COMPLETELY BROKE DOWN THERE AND THEN...
I KEPT SAYING TO MYSELF UNDER THE SOBS "WHY? WHY? WHY....?"
I MEAN, I'VE GOT A NEW SINGLE COMING OUT NEXT WEEK AND NOW IT'LL NEVER MAKE NUMBER ONE...
PAT PAT

Daily Mail
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1997
35p

GOOD HEALTH
PAGES 34-39

SIR DAVID WEEPS BITTER TEARS OF GUILT

by PRINCE CHARLES MOORE

A LONELY figure walks silently across the newsroom floor.

He weeps bitter tears. Tears of grief, of shame, of heartfelt remorse.

For David English, first in line to the Daily Mail empire, the past four days have been one long nightmare of humiliation.

The death of Diana has made Sir David the focus for a mighty wave of hatred and revulsion welling up from every corner of the nation.

Today millions of ordinary men, women and toddlers are asking "Has the time come for this man who treated Diana so shamefully when she was alive to abdicate?"

English Rose and Fell

We at the Daily Mail make no apology for printing this old photograph of Britain's most hated man, which we have doctored to make him look sad and guilt ridden.

We make no apology either for making up what we think might be going on in his mind.

We at the Daily Mail, on behalf of the ordinary people of Britain, can print anything we like.

And perhaps the most heartening thing of all is that in the past tragic week our profits have doubled.

ON OTHER PAGES: Why as a matter of principle I have ordered that the Daily Mail is to publish no more pictures taken by paparazzi unless someone else does in which case I shall change my mind by the proprietor of the Daily Mail the Rt Honourable the Viscount Lord Rothermere.

45p
Friday
September 19
1997

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
The Guardian

Amazing Claims in Newspaper

by Our Really Responsible Royal Staff Alan Rubbisher and Alan Even Rubbishier

AN amazing newspaper published today, edited by the feared British muckraker Alan Rubbishy, made sensational claims about an American book which no one can read as it will not be published here.

The book makes astonishing allegations about the Royal Family which the *Guardian* does not detail because it doesn't want to get a writ and knows that the stories probably aren't true anyway.

This has not stopped Mr Rubbishy going ahead with his front page scoop. When asked to comment on his incredible newspaper Mr "Kitty" Rubbishy was unavailable for comment.

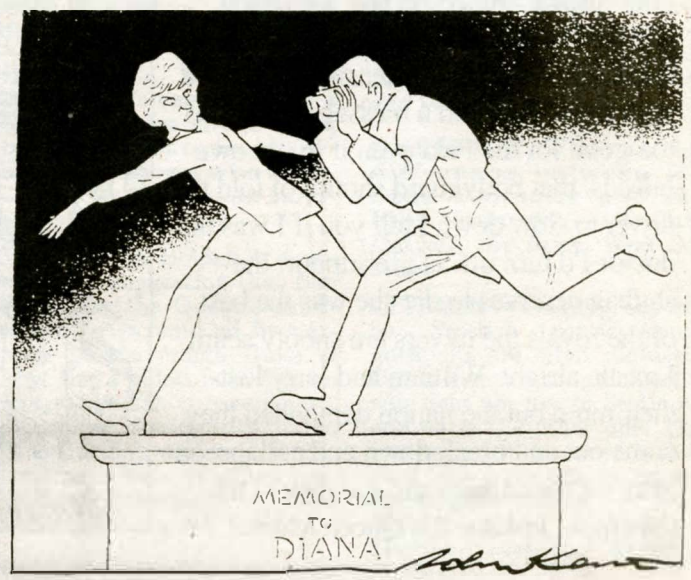
Said a spokesman, "Mr Rubbishy is far too busy drafting a new privacy law which will prevent intrusion into the lives of the Royal Family".

Miss Kitty Kelley is 79, or 84, or 98.

ON OTHER PAGES: Paul Dacre answers Charles Moore's attack on David English's response to Conrad Black's attack on (continued in all newspapers)

As a young virgin, the New Testament recounts, Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel who told her that she was to bear Christ's son.

Grauniad



DIANA'S FRIEND DIES

by Our Man in Calcutta
Lunchtime O'Vershadowed

AN ELDERLY nun who was once photographed shaking hands with the late Princess of Wales has died.

The nun first met Diana during the course of the Princess's work amongst the sick and dying and was apparently greatly inspired by her example.

Mother Teresa, as she was called, set up a mission to the poor of Calcutta which often ran into controversy, not least because of her lack of medical training and attempts to offer the downtrodden "love" rather than social justice.

However, despite these failings and a suspicion that the elderly nun enjoyed jetting around the world meeting famous people, she was judged to have been worthy of Princess Diana's friendship.

Her state funeral in Calcutta was a quiet event and was suitably low-key, so as to avoid any presumptuous similarities with that of Diana who is already being considered for canonisation by *(That's enough. Ed.)*

© *The Times*

"I'd never been in a small aircraft when I got taken up by an aerobics pilot. The experience knocked me for six and I had my first lesson a week later," *Grauniad*

WHITE NECTARINES	1.99
CAUSE OF DEATH	3.99
TND/CHICKEN NAAN	
Reduced Price	0.69

Sainsbury's

THE THEORY OF DEVOLUTION

Early Scotsman | Modern Scotsman | Future Scotsman

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE (CHARLES'S PAD)

Chazza will be taking the kids for a Happy Meal at McDonalds. The Royal party will be attended by Wayne Gobbo (***) who will wish them a nice day and present them with a plastic figurine of Pongo, the Dalmatian from the Disney Film.

They will then proceed to Thorpe Park, stopping to buy baseball hats from the Texaco Mini-Store, and queue for the Log Flume Ride.

1st Log
Chazza and the Boys

2nd Log
Air Commodore Nigel Bartlett-Humes, Equerry to Chazza; Chief Superintendent David Walkman-Talkman of the Royal Protection Division of the Metropolitan Police Force; Tinky-Winky Legge-Teletubby, Royal Nanny Pursuivant.

3rd Log
A Blood-Member of the Spencer Family (to be announced) to safeguard the interests of the young princes.
(That's enough. Ed.)

Harry Enfield's **Bores** Drawn by **Michael Heath** **21. Vox Pop**

"The press are scum I tell you they killed our Princess if I ever see anyone reading a tabloid I'll punch their fuckin' lights out see my baby boy? 'e was born the day after we called 'im Diano there was anuvver kid just born in the ward 'er parents called 'er Shelly I took 'er dad outside and said 'you call your girl Diana you treacherous scum!' an' I gived 'im a good smack broked 'is jaw, for Diana like, she would of approved. I cried all week I've gone down Kensington Palace with some flars and a message 'You was too good for the Paki even if 'e did own 'arrods' that bodyguard should of told the driver to slow down I tell you if I was the doctor I'd turn off 'is life support the shitbag deserves to die she was the best of the royals the uvvers are snooty scum I mean, alright, William and 'arry lost their mum but the nation demanded they come out and break down and collapse in tears for the camera and did they? Did they fuck! I blame the Queen Mum..."

How Should We Commemorate Diana, Princess of Wales?

We print a selection from the 58,000,000 letters sent in by our readers.

... may I suggest that the whole of the M1 should be turned into a permanent flower garden?
Mrs Enid Nutter, Brize Norton

... my idea is for Heathrow Airport to be renamed Her Royal Highness Diana, Princess of Wales Airport.
W. Hague, House of Commons

... what more fitting tribute could there be than to rename the Millennium Dome the Di-llennium Dome?
Mr Cyril Growbag, Burgess Hill

... may I suggest that the words of Elton John's wonderful song, Candle in the Wind, should be set in stained glass and placed in the East Window of Westminster Abbey?
Rev Nigel Gokart, Kidderminster

... surely there is only one fitting way to remember the Queen of All Our Hearts — to rename the days of the week in her memory, i.e. Sun-di, Mon-di, Tues-di etc.
Miss Teresa Clingfilm, Isle of Sheppey

... surely the most appropriate way to commemorate the People's Princess must be to replace the Queen's head with Diana's on all our coinage and banknotes? This way she will always be with us...
Lady Brenda Toast, Chipping Campden

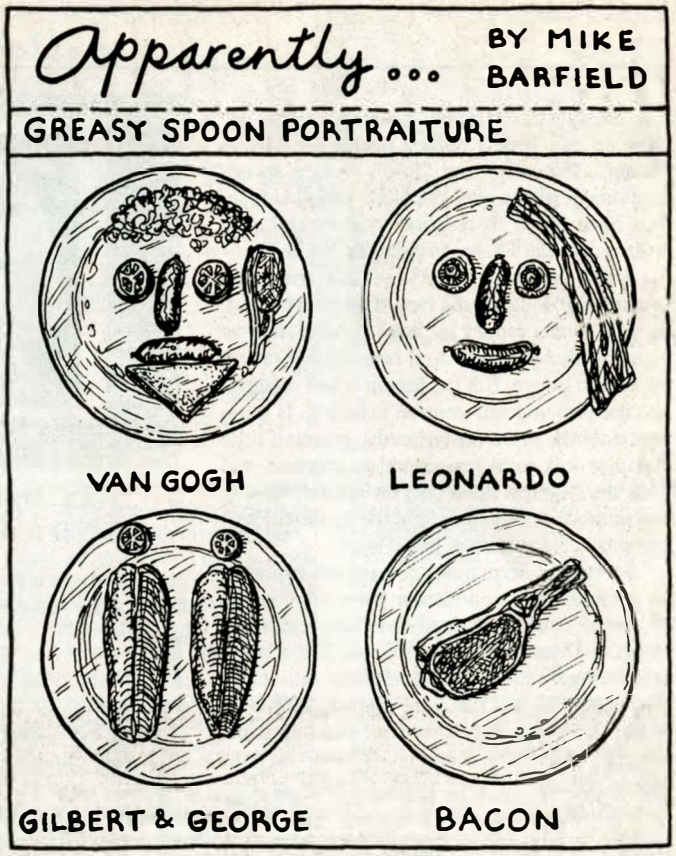
... surely we as a nation should show our gratitude to Diana's brother for having the courage to speak out on behalf of the ordinary people of Britain. My suggestion is that he be made an Earl...
Mrs Boris Guppy, Eton

... how many of your readers recall that in ancient times Diana was the Goddess of the Moon? From now on, why don't we call the Moon 'the Diana'?
Sir David Frostrup, Weston-super-toseeyou

... why don't they coin a commemorative medal to be presented by the Queen to all those millions who queued (many for up to ten hours) to sign the books of condolence or to lay flowers in tribute to the most wonderful woman in history — its title, of course, the O.D.E. (the Order of Diana's Empire).
Mr E.R. Dafte, Chelmsford

... may I suggest that Remembrance Day should be rededicated to the memory of the Princess, rather than the dead of two world wars who are no longer relevant to modern Britain...
Prof. Stephen Ketchup, Manchester

And still the suggestions roll in. If you have any ideas to fill our pages, however ridiculous, please send them in, by letter, fax or email, because after two weeks we are desperate.



Notes & Queries

QUESTION. What is the correct pronunciation of "Althorp"? There seems to be some confusion about this. — *D. Dimbleby, White City*

☐ TREVOR McDonald is quite wrong in claiming that Althorp should rhyme with "Jeremy Thorpe". Althorp derives from the Anglo-Saxon words "All tripe", meaning a nobleman who gets above himself and talks a lot of pious and hypocritical cant about "family values" when his own record in this respect is less than edifying. The correct pronunciation is "humbug" — *Mrs Van der Kaffirbasher, Capetown.*

QUESTION. Who is Ben Pimlott? We seem to hear a lot about him these days, but I have yet to meet anyone who knows who he is. — *Mrs Cynthia Pimlott (no relation), Tufnell Park*

☐ ANTONIA Holden is quite wrong in suggesting that Ben Pimlott is the Queen's third-cousin, twice removed, by marriage to the fourth Duke of Fife. Ben Pimlott is in fact an anagrammatic pseudonym, concealing the identity of one of the leading writers and constitutional experts of our age, William Rees-Mogg. — *Will Hutton, Farringdon Road.*

QUESTION. We are told that there are now more than 23,000 Books of Condolence containing millions of signatures and tributes to the late Princess of Wales. Is it true that these are to be kept in the British Museum? — *Mrs Asda Safeway, Poundbury, Dorset*

☐ THE books are to be kept, but not in the British Museum. The latest plan is that they will all be put on display underneath the Millennium Dome. Here they will remain for at least a thousand years, under the constant supervision of teams of highly-trained archivists under the direction of Prof. Ben Pimlott. — *Chris Smith, Minister for Culture and the Media.*

QUESTION. What is the difference between Mr Sean Connolly and Mr Billy Connery? — *Mr Tam Dalyell, the Binn, West Lothian*

☐ THESE two leading experts on Scottish constitutional questions are often confused. One is a very boring rich actor who does not live in Scotland, and so is the other one. The way to tell them apart is that they both have beards, except for Brigitte Bardot. — *Prof. Norman Stone, Institute of Turkish Delight, Ankara's Aweigh.*

DIARY

AT HOME WITH
LYNDA LEE-POTTER

The sight of the grinning, seedy-looking figures on my Rice Krispies packet — Messrs "Snap", "Crackle" and "Pop" — is a savage indictment of the way breakfast cereal characters have failed to respond to the tragic, untimely death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

These heartless, stocky, sexless characters are happy to laugh in the face of a nation at grief. In life, Diana taught us how to love and she taught us how to care. And now she has taught us how to grieve. But the lesson is lost on those too babyish and self-centred to hear it. Is it too much to ask these nasty, seedy, grasping little Krispies folk to at least stand to attention and look the slightest bit sorry? Or are they simply too dumb and unfeeling to abide by the rules of ordinary decent human behaviour?

So far, the French police have not managed to establish the connection between "Snap", "Crackle" and "Pop" and the tragic, untimely death of Diana, Princess of Wales. The unfeeling Kelloggs family must be sighing with relief. But when the full facts are known, I have no doubt that these three drunken, cackling overweight yobs will be seen to have blood on their hands. If anyone saw Snap, Crackle or Pop hounding Diana on a high-speed motorbike, or tampering with Mr al Fayed's Mercedes, it is their duty to come forward. Until then, a nationwide boycott of Rice Krispies might just show the tragic little Princes that we share their tears, poor loves.

On GMTV, fat, double-chinned Eamonn Holmes tells us that the self-regarding, ill-pointing North-bound carriageway of the gloomy, self-centred M11 will be closed between unctuous, inefficient junctions 6 and 7 owing to a damp, blubbery burst water-main.

It's yet another pathetic display of a television presenter with a £250,000 detached house in sought-after Surrey, who is paid handsomely for cheering us up in the morning, turning his back on the general public who made him what he is and telling us the news we don't want to hear.

This arrogant belief in his own god-given newscasting abilities will soon cost overweight, furry-tongued Holmes his job. Surely if the last few tragic, untimely weeks have taught us anything, it is that only sex-molesters and hardened criminals wish to know about burst drains blocking off junctions 6 and 7 on the northbound carriageway of the M11. The rest of us prefer to mourn the tragic, untimely death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Foul-smelling, ill-shaven Mr Postie lurches disreputably to the front door bearing the morning's postbag, full of smashing envelopes from you, my lovely, lovely readers.

Each super envelope bears a stamp. Why does the snooty, Royaller-than-thou Queen always wear a tiara when posing for stamps? Who does she think she is? If good old-fashioned commonsense was tiara-shaped, I'd be asked to pose for a stamp every day of my life. And rather than spending all day posing for stamps, wouldn't the Queen's time be better spent grieving over the tragic, untimely death of Diana, Princess of Wales?

Outside, the leaves begin to fall. The lovely, caring, hand of nature beckons us to bide-a-while in her autumnal hues. Husbands and wives walk together in dewy glades as birds of hill and vale flutter and twitter overhead.

But the worst thing a wife can do is walk with her husband through a dewy glade. Wrinkly, menopausal Mrs Anne Parkinson once walked with her dapper, smarmy husband Cecil through a dewy glade. And look what happened to her. Men are filled with hatred for women who force them to walk hand-in-hand through dewy glades. Men are vain, spiteful, vengeful, libidinous creatures who cling to their anger forever.

Clumsy, over-rated Autumn brings out the worst in them. Realistic, sensible, hard-working women must shield men from it. Personally, I'll be spending the next few months with my super, trusty rake, scissors and sticky sellotape, prowling the garden in search of fallen leaves and sticking them back onto the trees, where they belong. That way, my husband will never guess its Autumn. And then I'll be able to relax in blessed silence around a roaring fire with a glass of cold white wine and the latest Jeffrey Archer, knowing that vengeful, obsessive Sarah Keays isn't going to ruin our lives as well.

And so to work. The Today programme says that Dodi's driver was drunk. I write a heartfelt, outspoken piece condemning him in the harshest possible terms for heartlessly destroying the lives of the caring Princess and her famously loveable, svelte boyfriend. Then the mid-day news on Radio 2 says that Dodi's driver was sober. I write a heartfelt, outspoken piece condemning all those who so mercilessly jumped to the wrong conclusion, and praise this decent, family-loving driver for his professionalism at the wheel. Then the News at One says that Dodi may have taken drugs, and his driver may have been over the limit. I write a heartfelt, outspoken piece condemning the notoriously paunchy, social-climbing Dodi and his self-confessedly French, foul-mouthed driver. Then the mid-afternoon news says that the accident was caused by the heartless French paparazzi. I write a heartfelt, outspoken piece condemning the garlicky, pompous, nasty French paparazzi for their pathetic and cowardly disregard for human life. Then the PM programme says that Dodi and his driver were sober, and the paparazzi were miles away. So I write a heartfelt, outspoken piece condemning the Queen Mother. "If only that stocky, pleasure-seeking old lady had just this once put her own needs to one side and had the common decency to don a chauffeur's hat and uniform and drive the Mercedes that fateful night, this untimely, tragic accident might never have occurred" I write. "Instead, she preferred a quiet night in, stuffing her face with expensive bittermints and gin-soaked bonbons. The Paris police need look no further. A good, strong knock on the door of pricey, overblown Clarence House and they will have caught their pampered, matronly villain red-handed." It's a super, smashing, huggy, caring piece, for you, my lovely, lovely readers, helping we as a nation to grieve as one, bless us.

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

TAMARA BECKWITH'S SCHOOLDAYS:
YOU'RE 'IT'
YOU REALLY THINK SO?
YES.... YOU HAVE SUPERIOR NETWORKING AND P.R. SKILLS..... SAVOIR FAIRE..... AND YOU WEAR THAT UNIFORM EXQUISITELY!
BEEP BEEP

Rita lives in a Victorian detached house in Lower Pilsley, Derbyshire, with her boyfiend, a man called Mo.

Sunday Telegraph

Our aim is to produce renaissance women who value sport, drama, art and music and who plan interesting expeditions to places like Uganda.

Independent

THE annual bazaar of the Burford branch of the Royal British Legion will be held in the Warwick Hall, Church Green at 2pm, with stalls, refreshments and a bouncy castle.

Witney Gazette

Literary Review

The Life of Norman

The Gospel According To The Son
Norman Mailer
(Abacus, £14.00)

FOR decades now, Norman Mailer's detractors have sneered that he thinks he's God. His latest novel makes clear that this is quite untrue. Big Norm is merely under the illusion that he's the son of God.

Over 242 widely-spaced pages, Mailer has written the autobiography of Jesus Christ. The book is dedicated to the author's own nine children, as if to establish that the writer has done research into this business of being the offspring of a great figure. (Mailer's middle name, incidentally, is "Malech", Hebrew for "King". You can see the effect this might have on an impressionable young boy.)

Mailer has a reputation for extremity. His second novel *Barbary Shore* was notorious at the time for its filth. He championed the "reformed" killer John Henry Abbot, an aspiring writer, who inevitably reoffended. *Ancient Evenings*, his long Egyptian novel, concentrated more than most chroniclers of the pharaohs on the cult of buggery.

So you can see why – when the word of Norm's new novel spread round Manhattan – it was widely anticipated that Christian theology had found its Salman Rushdie. The New York literati held cocktail-party competitions to come up with the first lines of Mailer's Jesus memoir. Most predictions were along the lines of " 'Suck this, bitch', I said to Mary Magdalene".

The *Grauniad* – which bought serial rights – had clearly gambled on such blasphemy, excitedly proclaiming the "controversy" that the book had caused in America in publication. In fact, the only shocks caused in the States were to those who had expected some. Most Anglican bishops would be appalled only at the novel's simple orthodoxies.

I mean, you kind of assumed that Norman's Jesus would be revisionist or at least have a Brooklyn accent. But he takes the whole thing on trust. He even, goddammit, buys up to the Virgin Birth: "The angel said, 'Mary, thou hast found favour with God. Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son'." There have been one of two plagiarism rows in Mailer's career and, here, the bulk of the dialogue comes from some (uncredited) regular translation of the Bible.

The reader hangs on, guessing that there must be some spin on the Resurrection. Even Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd-Webber, not obvious controversialists, pointedly ended *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Crucifixion. (Jim Crace, in his recent novel *Quarantine*, has the Christ figure dying from starvation in the wilderness and never even reaching Jerusalem.)

But, incredibly, Norman is again the fundamentalist on this one: "I know that I rose on the third day. And I also recall that I left the sepulchre to wander through the city and the countryside." The Ascension, too, is regarded in this fiction as fact, for the memoirs can only have been dictated from heaven and end: "I remain on the right hand of God."

To be fair, Mailer does *slightly* risk offending Christians with the suggestion that God and Jesus have had one of those father-son spats: "My father, however, does not often speak to me." And it's stated that Joseph later twice impregnated Mary in the natural way to give Jesus two brothers. But it's only one line and, on the scale of heresies, that one is the smallest of all.

At one point, Mailer risks giving his insipid Jesus a joke as he recalls the temptation in the wilderness: "The Devil nodded as if he were a good Jew (which I was certain he was not!") Christ-as-Pooter is certainly an original twist on Christianity, though one which we could probably have done without.

Even the device which Mailer obviously regards as an innovation is, in fact, unoriginal. He consistently grounds Jesus in his apprenticeship as a carpenter. All of his metaphors are taken from his trade and he occasionally breaks off to pass on some workshop knowhow: "[Joseph] told us of a substance called pozzuolana, an earth that came from the volcanoes south of Rome; this pozzuolana, mixed with lime, became a cement."

And, as he is raised on the cross, Jesus complains about the shoddy carpentry of the construction. A cute touch but Dennis Potter did it long ago and better in his 1969 play Son of Man.

Mailer has been one of the most daring writers in American literature and it's sad but inevitable that this exhausted and tawdry exercise should have become his biggest-selling book for decades. Wooden and badly constructed, *The Gospel According To The Son* is a cross that Mailer's reputation will struggle to bear.

Books & Bookmen

■ *ED VICTOR, the sharkish literary agent, expressed his outrage at the rush of publishers bringing out books about Diana, Princess of Wales. "I think there is going to be a convocation of ghouls around this thing," he told the Guardian. "I have decided not to be part of that."*

Meanwhile in America Diana worshippers are clamouring for tribute books of their own. And who has been hawking the American rights to one such book Flowers in the Park by Martin Miller? Er, one Ed Victor – all in aid of charity of course.

In Britain, Julie Burchill has managed to find time off from editing The Modern Review to give the country her own slant on the princess who "showed up the House of Windsor for what it was: a dumb, numb dinosaur". Her agent Georgina Capel is rumoured to have scooped a £100,000 advance for Burchill's fascinating revelations from publisher Weidenfeld & Nicholson.

Elsewhere Weidenfeld is determined to be first off the mark with a Diana tribute. It told booksellers in a greedy missive entitled "The Pitch": "We publish on Friday 12 September and Colour Library follow on with their book on 18 September while Michael O'Mara do not reissue their old Diana A Life in Pictures until 26 September".

Continuing this triumphalist tone Weidenfeld suggests its publication will be "a book many people will want to treasure as a memorial to the woman who touched the hearts of millions". But before anyone accuses the publisher of making money from the death, it adds sanctimoniously: "We will be donating a royalty to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund". So that's all right, then.

□ **VISTA may attract more attention than it means to this autumn when it publishes *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Cow Book!*, a collection of cartoons about BSE.**

One illustration is sure to provoke debate. It shows the royal family on the balcony of Buckingham Palace with Prince Charles kissing his new bride – a mad cow in a necklace. Impeccable timing as ever from the world of publishing.

■ DR Raj Persaud's publicists at Metro were left with egg on their faces after the "debate" between Persaud and Prof Anthony Clare at Church House, Westminster.

Their attempts to drum up interest in Persaud's mental health self-help book, *Staying Sane*, all went horribly wrong. Clare attacked the credibility of Richard and Judy's resident shrink and then rubbished the book's "out-of-date" sources.

Still, it wasn't all doom and gloom for Persaud. When the debate was opened up to the floor, one woman piped up to large grins all round: "I am Raj Persaud's mother-in-law, and although I have only read three chapters, it is a very good book. I think we all need something to hold on to – *Staying Sane* will help us to stay sane." No doubt a red-faced Persaud counted his blessings for at least one heartfelt plug.

□ **TOM WELDON** and Louise **Moore, who since arriving at Michael Joseph have spent £4m buying up authors, are widely recognised as the hottest commercial editors in London. But a bizarre rumour is circulating that Weldon has paid £185,000 for the memoirs of former minister and ex-MP David Mellor. Surely this cannot be true? If it is, Weldon's reputation will take a long time to recover...**

'Bookworm'

footnotes

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNST

A BLATANT tax dodge to avoid VAT on the purchase of equipment is being marketed to national health service trusts by the big accountancy combine Ernst & Young.

NHS trusts are obliged by law to pay 17.5 percent VAT on all the equipment they buy. A recent attempt to avoid this tax by leasing the equipment to and from other trusts or universities was frustrated by legislation closing the loophole. But Ernst & Young promptly devised another loophole, as follows:

The trust buys the equipment and immediately leases it on to a third party, a shadow company in Guernsey. Because there is no VAT in Guernsey, the lease is not liable to VAT. The Guernsey "company" then leases the equipment back to the trust. This transaction isn't subject to VAT either. Usually there is a "reverse charge" of VAT to cover such bogus imports, but this only applies for a business activity, not for a non-business activity such as patient care. Thus the trust would only have to pay VAT on the equipment in proportion to any private health care it provides, not for its NHS activities.

This complicated and ingenious device was worked out by the boffins at Ernst & Young, and approved by their highly-paid tax lawyers. All through 1997, the senior VAT manager at Ernst & Young, Mr B.J. Withey, has been trying to flog it to NHS trusts. His enticing prospectus includes a diagram which shows that on purchase of equipment for £1m, the average trust could expect to save about £120,000 in unpaid VAT, even after paying a hefty cut of about £20,000 (10 percent of net savings) to Ernst & Young.

Mr Withey's pitch is simple. The trust saves money. Ernst & Young makes a lot of money. Everyone is happy. No wonder he has been so successful with so many trusts in the North-west where he has been concentrating his sales patter over recent months. The big Manchester cancer hospital Christies, for instance, jumped at the new scheme and has been cheerfully avoiding VAT on equipment purchases ever since.

But Mr Withey's exciting arguments do not always prevail. Some trust directors who maintain a flickering devotion to the concept of a national health service financed by taxes have balked at a scheme to swipe money from the exchequer which funds the NHS. They argue that if they adopt the scheme, the exchequer will get less money, which will mean less money available for the NHS. They will, in short, be diddling their own paymaster — and the only people to be genuinely richer from the device will be the shareholders of Ernst & Young.

Others point out that the government can at any time retrospectively close the loophole, and the trusts, after shelling out tens of thousands to Ernst & Young, could lose their tax advantage too. So a few trusts are holding out against the scheme. How many? The *Eye* asked Ernst & Young:

1) How many trusts have accepted the scheme and how many have refused it?

2) What does Ernst & Young have to say about the ethics of persuading NHS trusts to avoid paying their taxes to the government which finances them?

Ernst & Young took rather a long time to ponder these simple questions. The answer, when it came, blossomed with the frankness for which the big six accountancy firms are so renowned. "Er, you see, these trusts are our clients. And we never really say anything about our clients. No, really, we have nothing at all to say about this, absolutely nothing."

FOUR FLUSH MEN WHO RUN ERNST & YOUNG: Left to right, Andrew Jones, Nick Land, Donald Turner , Chris Williams

Kincora: the fire last time

■ **AFTER a front page story in the London *Evening Standard* last month alleged a connection between a 1992 fire in Palmeira Road, Hove, which killed five people, and a ring of child abusers in North Wales, Sussex police announced a fresh investigation.**

One of the men killed in the fire was alleged by the *Standard* to have been blackmailing a former owner of a children's home in North Wales who is in prison for sexual offences against children in his care. New forensic evidence about the fire suggests it was started deliberately.

This is the third time Sussex police have investigated links between child abuse rings in other parts of the country. In the early 1970s they were contacted by a Northern Ireland travel writer called Robert Harbinson (aka Bryans) who alleged that he had been badly treated in Brighton by a group of well-connected gay men.

These included the spy Sir Anthony Blunt and his former Cambridge lover, Peter Montgomery, who later became high sheriff of the Northern Ireland county of Tyrone. Harbinson's persistent allegations so infuriated the police they prosecuted him for wasting their time. In 1974 he was bound over at Bow Street magistrates court in London, but not before Sussex police had closely investigated his allegations about the Northern Ireland gay ring and decided to take no action.

In 1980 Colin Wallace was charged by Sussex police with the murder of his friend Jonathan Lewis, convicted of manslaughter and sent to prison for six years. Last year his conviction was quashed by the court of appeal. Wallace has consistently argued that he was framed because of his campaign against intelligence dirty tricks in Northern Ireland, where he had been a highly successful information officer for the army.

In 1982 the then Northern Ireland secretary James Prior ordered a police investigation into prolonged and horrific abuse of the inmates of Kincora Boys Home, Belfast. He turned at once to the Sussex police. The chief constable George Terry was put in charge of the inquiry. His report was never published in full, but it cleared intelligence officers of any involvement with Kincora.

This comfortable conclusion was dented by subsequent revelations that William McGrath, the abuser-in-chief and "housefather" at Kincora, an Orange fanatic, had doubled up as a British intelligence agent; and that the Northern Ireland police investigating Kincora had been refused permission even to ask questions of a top MI5 officer in Northern Ireland. The truth was that MI5 knew for years about abuse at Kincora but allowed it to continue so that its precious agent McGrath could be protected.

Perhaps the Sussex police should look again at their investigations 20 years ago into the links between the paedophile scene in Brighton and Hove and child abuse in Northern Ireland.

COURT OUT

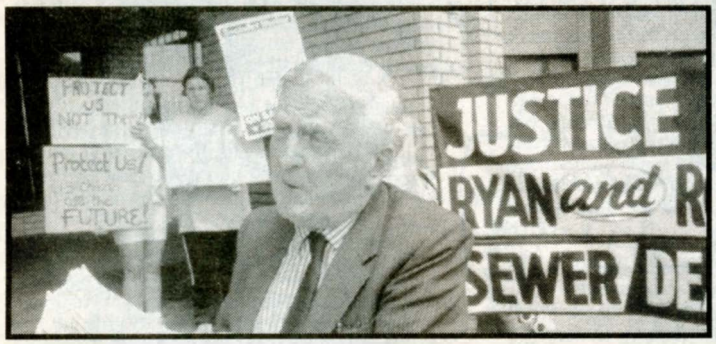
■ **IF YOU are unemployed and summoned to appear in court, even if you are not proved guilty of anything, you are not available for work and therefore not entitled to the job seeker's allowance. But then again if you don't turn up to court and sign on to claim your allowance, you can be put in prison for contempt and so won't be available for work either.**

This problem recently puzzled Stephen Wood, 31, who lives in Bradford's Holmwood estate. He is out of work and his only income is his jobseeker's allowance. His house was raided recently by Bradford police looking for stolen goods. After a long and fruitless search they charged him with dishonestly handling 24 teddy bears. He was summoned to appear at Bradford crown court on Friday 11 July, the day he should have signed on at the job centre.

Stephen was in court all day until he was bailed. When he went to sign on the following Monday and explained he had been in court, he was told he had not been available for work and couldn't get his money. His legal representative, Jim Brady, wrote explaining the position and the allowance was reinstated. But only temporarily. A letter to Mr Brady from a D. Brown of the Job Centre, who signs himself "back to work team leader", says the case has been sent to higher authority for guidance.

"Applying the current guidelines," writes the team leader, "if the client cannot attend to sign because they are appearing in court, we do have to suspend their allowance on the availability question."

UNDERHAND AND UNDER NEATH



JOHN MORRIS AND PROTESTERS: As MP for Aberavon, he is concerned, but as Attorney General he can't possibly comment.

ELEVEN months after South Wales council workers Ryan Preece and Robert Simpson were killed by poisonous chemicals in a sewer, the regulating authority, Welsh Water plc, has finally announced that it will prosecute the company concerned.

One reason for the delay may be the embarrassing questions: how did these dangerous chemicals get into the sewer without anyone in authority noticing? And could the deaths have been linked to the shifting and juggling of ozone-depleting gases (CFCs) whose production has been progressively banned by international agreement?

Two days after the men were killed last October, Will Watson, head of Neath-Port Talbot council's direct services department, their employer, announced that two toxic CFCs had been found in the sewage chamber where the men died while trying to unblock a pump. The chemicals were Freon 11 and methylstyrene. The October issue of *ENDS*, a specialist environmental journal, reported that the evidence pointed to a spillage of the chemicals at a local chemical company, and named Gower Chemicals, whose factory at Crymlyn Burrows near Neath is only a few yards from the sewer.

In the next few weeks, as associated illness, grief and indignation at the deaths swept the area, South Wales police investigated the spillage and freely passed the information on to the men's families. The Freon 11, they reported, had been brought into the country from Holland, taken to Runcorn, headquarters of ICI and European Vinyls, and from there carried by tanker to Gower Chemicals for repackaging and exporting to the third world.

The story fitted increasingly disturbing reports in the scientific press about the constant shifting and rerouting of CFSs following the ban on their production by the Montreal Protocol in 1988, 1990 and 1992. Although production of CFCs is banned, the loopholes in the protocol are so vast there is still a huge traffic in them. In the very month of the deaths at Crymlyn Burrows, the *New Scientist* reported: "Many of the CFCs are legal. Aside from recycled CFCs, gases stockpiled before January 1996 can be traded and used. CFCs can also be manufactured or repackaged in industrial nations for sale to the developing world."

Consistent demand for CFCs for maintaining air conditioning systems and national differences in regulations lead to constant shifting of CFCs. The South Wales police confessed themselves amazed and puzzled as to the roundabout route of the Freon 11 to Gower Chemicals. In fact, the story they uncovered was typical of the highly profitable trade in old, recycled or smuggled CFCs.

The probability that Ryan Preece and Robert Simpson in their death stumbled across the international trade in CFCs may explain the sudden silence of the authorities. Thirty three thousand people in the Neath area signed a petition demanding a criminal prosecution of the chemical company for corporate manslaughter. This has been refused by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), and the police, once so eloquent in their outrage, now say nothing.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is prosecuting the council for technical offences of allowing their workers to enter the sewer without masks. The Welsh Water prosecution for breaches of trade effluent legislation can only result in a fine. Karen Stacey, Ryan Preece's sister, tells the *Eye*: "We all feel certain there is some kind of cover-up going on."

Alan Watson, of Friends of the Earth Cymru, emphasises the extraordinary level of secrecy in the area of sewage and water pollution. "The privatised company is its own regulator," he says. "That's bad enough. What is worse is the fact that Welsh Water are banned by law from publishing the results of their own investigations into the dangerous chemicals poured down sewers. The likelihood is that we would never have known there was anything wrong in the sewer at Crymlyn Burrows unless these men had gone down there. How many more people must die before the authorities are forced to publish the facts about the poisons released into our seas, our rivers and our sewers?"

High Principals

Memo: Ashurst to Ashurst

■ **SHOCKED by the publicity in the *Eye* and elsewhere about the sacking of the lecturers' union rep at Doncaster College, Nina Ashurst, clerk to the governors, has drawn up a "draft policy and procedure on whistleblowing". Luckily, the draft has been approved by the principal (sorry, chief executive) of the college, Terry Ashurst, Nina's husband.**

The procedure seeks to keep any complaints "internal" so that "dangerous and embarrassing matters can be dealt with and resolved internally". Legitimate whistleblowing, she suggests, "does not include mismanagement" — such as for instance the sacking of union reps. Moreover "any employee who abuses the whistleblowing procedure" would be bringing the college into disrepute and would, naturally, be sacked.

Suppose a whistleblower wanted to complain about the appointment, say, of the chief executive's wife as clerk to the corporation? To whom should the complaint be made? Obviously, writes Nina Ashurst, to "a member of the Principalship", five people including the chief executive, Terry Ashurst and the clerk to the corporation, Nina Ashurst.

If the internal complaint doesn't work, the whistleblower can go higher up — to an "appropriate body" like the quango, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Potential whistleblowers at Doncaster have been a little nervous of complaining to the FEFC ever since last May when a trade unionist lecturer wrote a private and confidential letter asking for a meeting between the FEFC inspectors of the college and the union. Sue Rowland, reporting inspector of the FEFC, refused such a meeting point blank and promptly dashed off a "Dear Terry" letter to Ashurst supplying him with the name of the confidential complainant.

Saving the Whale

■ **Meanwhile, what is becoming known in South Yorkshire as the "Ashurst syndrome" seems to be spreading into local schools.**

At Kimberworth Comprehensive school in Rotherham (most famous alumnus: David Seaman) head teacher Melvyn Whale has carried out the first two Ashurst principles to the letter. He has vigorously promoted his girlfriend, Judith Knapton, who once operated the photocopying machine but is now the bursar and clerk to the governors. And he has sacked the union rep. At a recent hearing, an industrial tribunal in Sheffield unanimously upheld the claim of Caroline Dewar, an English teacher at the school for 17 years and the National Union of Teachers rep, that she had been unfairly dismissed and her contract broken.

Mr Whale did not come out of the hearing too well. "Any headmaster worth his salt would have been more sensitive to the feelings of his staff," the tribunal concluded. Whales's behaviour was described as "untruthful", "wholly insensitive" and "wholly unacceptable". The tribunal made it clear that the main reason Mr Whale behaved so disgracefully was Caroline Dewar's union activity.

OFF SCREEN

ALLAN SHIACH is resigning as chairman of Scottish Screen, the new agency in overall control of the Scottish film industry. He tells the *Scotsman* (9 Sept): "I've been in the job for six years and I don't think anybody should be in that kind of a job for longer than five or six years."

In fact he has been in the job for five months. He must have been referring to his previous chairmanship of the Scottish Film Council which was absorbed into Scottish Screen earlier this year. His new contract at Scottish Screen was for at least four years.

His resignation has probably got more to do with a new organisation called Scottish Stand, satirically named after the Scottish stand at this year's Cannes film festival which was attended by at least 20 top people in the Scottish film industry. Scottish Stand was formed to protest against such freebies, and the "cosy" relationship between film-makers on committees which dish out public money for their films. The most controversial example of this practice — the hand-out of £1m lottery money for Mr Shiach's film *Regeneration* — was revealed in some detail in June in *Eye* 926.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

DOING THE ROUNDS

Still waiting

MD's views on waiting lists (*Eye* 932) provoked a balanced response from the medical hierarchy.

The suggestion that NHS surgeons are not used in the most efficient way and that some favour private work over NHS commitments was dismissed as "nonsense" and "rubbish" by Dr Peter Hawker, deputy chairman of the BMA's Central Consultants and Specialists Committee. "Everyone knows that the problem is funding." Even a spokesman from the Royal College of Surgeons was nudged into a response. "These are unsubstantiated claims..."

While underfunding is clearly the biggest problem facing the NHS, the claim that private practice is detrimental to the NHS is hardly unsubstantiated. In 1995 Dr John Yates, of Birmingham University, published *Private Eye, Heart and Hip*, which cited clear evidence that waiting list reductions in the UK have in part been hampered by some consultants spending an inappropriate amount of time with private patients.

The response from the BMA was predictable — one representative made a vitriolic personal attack on Yates' motives and political views in a radio interview — but the response from grass roots surgeons was divided. One wrote of his embarrassment at the failure of the profession to tackle abuses, another — on a maximum part time NHS contract — boasted that four fifths of his operating was private.

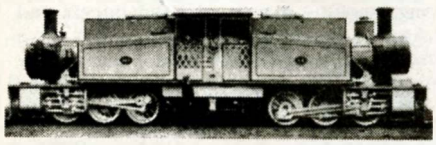
Protectors of the private faith have always argued that it benefits the NHS — that patients who pay for treatment aren't added to NHS lists — but Yates' research in Birmingham showed that consultants cannot be in two places at once and when they try to serve two masters, it is the NHS that suffers. Not that this evidence was easy to come by. He was repeatedly thwarted in his attempts to discover the truth but, with the help of observation by private detectives, managed to compile a formidably detailed dossier of the detrimental effect of private medicine on NHS waits.

Did it do any good? When he presented prima facie evidence of abuse at a Birmingham hospital to the regional health authority, it distorted it so much as to conclude that no problem existed. The Conservative government too decided to gloss over it, leaving an angry but persistent Dr Yates searching for more evidence to encourage the NHS to change.

He has now been joined by Prof Donald Light, of Manchester University, who wrote in the 12 July *BMJ* "The [current] arrangement provides strong incentives to minimise [i.e. ration] operations for NHS patients and use the NHS as an operating base for maximising private work... I have been told by consultants that some surgeons walk out with NHS X-rays for their private patients under their arm. This is stealing. If a cook walked out with a ham, she or he would be arrested. Some surgeons work out deals with GPs to take care of their NHS patients promptly if the GPs will steer patients who can pay over to their private practice. Some surgeons are said to manipulate their waiting lists and what they tell a given patient in order to get patients with money to go private. I am told the distorting effect of these 'sweetheart' contracts lead the minority who exploit them to believe that politicians and NHS patients should feel grateful for whatever work they do for the NHS..."

The abusers are very much in the minority and it is far more common to find that NHS surgeons work far more hours than they are paid for. However, for the BMA and Royal College of Surgeons to pretend that none of their flock works the system for pecuniary incentives truly is nonsense, rubbish and unsubstantiated.

M.D.



SIGNAL FAILURES

Focus on Central Trains

HOLIDAYMAKERS who visited Skegness by rail this summer will have at least as good an understanding as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) of what happens when a large and rich coach operator is handed a large rail franchise.

National Express is receiving more than £1bn in subsidy over seven years to run the Central Trains franchise, which includes the overcrowded Skegness service. But despite its massive subsidy, six-monthly group profits of £23.5m and a profit of £1.1m on its rail franchises, it intends to spend precisely 0p on extra rolling stock for Central trains. Instead, it often asks rail passengers to travel by coach.

Board of trade president Margaret Beckett referred National Express's takeover of Central Trains and Scotrail to the MMC; on both franchises National Express has a monopoly of public transport between certain towns and cities.

As the crowds descended on Skegness this summer many passengers had to stand for the two-hour journey from Nottingham because trains at the height of the holiday season were just one or two carriages long. National Express tried to entice travellers on to coaches, but many turned down the offer having paid the rail fare to get away from the congestion and dangers of the roads. On one typical day a lone 70-seater carriage was provided for more than 200 intending passengers, of whom 100 crammed into the train, 50 accepted the offer of a coach and 60 were left behind.

Other seaside areas served by Central Trains saw similar problems. A group of holidaymakers had to walk three miles to Barmouth or wait two hours for the next train, gambling on that service not being a packed single carriage like the one that left them behind. Parties were banned from trains on the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth line because, according to Central Trains, there is "a UK-wide shortage of rolling stock". (There is, of course, no shortage of road coaches).

In fact 700 useable spare carriages are rusting at army depots around Britain. When British Rail ran the Skegness service it took spare carriages from the sidings each summer and hitched freight locomotives to the front. Now complicated leases would have to be arranged for the carriages and locos and Railtrack would demand higher access payments. The real reason behind the under-size trains is a combination of laziness, stinginess and the bureaucracy created by the Tory government.

Central Trains is committed to running extra services during the seven-year franchise — but only in the West Midlands where a powerful passenger transport executive (PTE) pays a subsidy and calls the shots. In the areas where it is not forced to improve services by the PTE — including the East Midlands, Lincolnshire, Humberside, East Anglia, Cheshire, North and Mid Wales, Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester — Central Trains is committed to, er, no significant changes.

While the MMC is expected to report this month, the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Opraf) might consider whether Central Trains is paid more than £1bn of public money to provide cheap and cheerful road coaches for rail travellers instead of sufficient train capacity. Then again Opraf might not wish to look too closely since it was Opraf that awarded Central Trains and Scotrail to National Express *after* the Office of Fair Trading had identified conflicts of interest between National Express's Midland mainline franchise and its parallel coach services.

Providing coaches (which receive hidden subsidies) in lieu of adequate train capacity was always bound to appeal to National Express; the *Eye* revealed in March 1995 (issue 868) that the daily Railtrack access charge for a 500-seat train — the kind needed for Skegness in summer — equated to the road duty payable for 10 coaches *for a whole year*. Unless National Express hires extra rolling stock for Central Trains the franchise must surely pass to another company in 2004, if not sooner. How convenient it would be if passengers had by then got so cheesed off with under-sized trains they had switched to using coaches — many of them operated by, er, National Express.

'Dr B. Ching'

"Congratulations on reaching Rail Enquiries. Colin speaking – how may I hinder you?"

In the City

THE disinformation surrounding the high-speed death of the Princess of Wales will come as no surprise to those who know the history of Mohamed Fayed. The phoney pharaoh is both experienced and skilled in rewriting history, particularly through the mouths of others, to suit his needs. Today that need has never been greater as a Fayed version of events has once again been shown to be more self-serving fiction than fact.

Consider the record. Way back in the 60s he presented himself in Haiti — when romancing its dictator "Papa Doc" Duvalier's daughter and pillaging one of the world's poorest countries — as a wealthy Kuwaiti sheikh. Fiction not fact. He was an Egyptian hustler.

Twenty years later in Britain he presented himself to the gullible Tory government, City regulators and media as the scion of a wealthy Egyptian family whose vast fortune had been created over decades. Fiction not fact. The fiction was founded on false evidence and documents attesting to this fairy story and designed to hide the truth: that he had borrowed, probably from the Sultan of Brunei, with or without his knowledge, more than £500m to buy Harrods.

Since taking over Harrods in 1985 Fayed has continued to resort to disinformation when targeting those he considers a threat. There is a list of former executives who have been accused of criminal offences, usually theft or fraud, only for charges to be dropped or proved false. When Di and Dodi became an item it was necessary to create another false image — of Fayed junior as a fantastically rich and successful film producer. Once again more fiction than fact.

From 1980 until 1988, Allied Stars, the Fayed film company in Britain, invested in films with some success although its accumulated net profits by 1987 were merely £15,000. Then it went into film production backed by £630,000 from its shareholders — more the three Fayed brothers than Dodi Fayed, by then based in Hollywood and not even a director of the British company. Allied Stars was not a success. By 1991 accumulated losses were £459,000 and the company had ceased to produce or develop films. Two years later Allied Stars was taken over by a Liberian company of the same name and Dodi Fayed became a director. The British company was dissolved in 1994; the Liberian twin partied on.

That may help explain why in Hollywood Dodi Fayed was seen as a playboy, not a player; and a playboy with a reputation for a considerable appetite not just for girls but also cocaine.

Fast forward to today, and as questions and rumours about the crash and its causes increase, so does the Fayed camp's need to keep the attention of a public seeking someone to blame for the loss of its icon focused, first, on the murdering paparazzi and then (reluctantly) on the drunken driver Henri Paul rather than events inside the Ritz and the Ritz-provided car.

Result: a smokescreen (boosted by tales of engagements, homes and last words) designed to head off crucial questions which, once mourning turns to anger, may, however unfairly, be directed in Fayed's direction because those who decided Diana's fate that night were his son and his employees.

MATTERS appear to be going from bad to worse for Body Shop in France which remains a headache for the Queen of Green Anita Roddick (*Eye* 925). Body Shop has taken direct control of the French operation, aiming to sell or close it down at a cost of up to £6.5m while maintaining that problems are under control.

Six more shops are said to have closed in the last three months, some company-owned and some franchisee-owned. And a French business magazine has named Body Shop as a franchise to avoid.

Former franchisees suing the Body Shop-appointed former head franchisee G.W. Management for compensation are hoping to start hearing this month the results of several outstanding court cases. If the franchisees win it remains to be seen if Body Shop will have to pick up the tab.

THE bankers who have kept Brent Walker alive on a £1bn life support mechanism these many years will be perhaps less than amused to learn that the one-time leisure group is negotiating to sell one of its last remaining assets to a small syndicate including the man they love to hate — sacked founder George Walker.

The deal concerns some seven acres of land close to Hackney Stadium in east London. Walker has ideas of developing a Sunday market there and has recruited two partners to make a bid of around £1.75m. His share of the funding is said to be £500,000 from settlement of his pension claim with Brent Walker. The banks forced him out in 1991 ahead of Brent Walker's near collapse and the unsuccessful Serious Farce Office prosecution.

Talks are continuing over price but the banks, led by Standard Chartered, may not feel it appropriate to be selling to Walker at a time when his family trust is suing Brent Walker, who are in turn seeking to appeal a £8m award to the Walker trusts in France.

SUGGESTIONS that Nick Leeson will emerge from his Singapore prison cell to collect up to £3m from a proposed film of how he broke Barings may be somewhat premature.

His friendly interviewer Sir David Frost is planning a film of Leeson's book *Rogue Trader*, and Leeson is said to have already received a "six figure" advance. This has come as a surprise to his chief creditors — the administrators of Barings and his lawyers Kingsley Napley. Any advance is understood to have been less than five figures. Furthermore, any further sums will have to go first to pay off Leeson's substantial legal costs and meet the Barings claim — the administrators are in a position to obtain a judgment against any Leeson assets.

All of which suggests that not only will Nick be without his wife, the loyal Lisa, when he emerges from jail, probably not before 1999, but also without any ill-gotten millions.

CONMAN-turned-boxing promoter (*Is there a difference? Ed.*) Roger Levitt continues to enjoy his freedom in the US while the Department of Timidity & Inaction here gets its proposed extradition act together ahead of the trial of his former International Boxing Corporation associates in November.

Meanwhile it seems some of those responsible for his failure to be sentenced to more than community service for the Levitt Group fraud have not entirely escaped unscathed. Although cleared — surprise, surprise — by the Bar Council disciplinary committee of misleading the SFO and the then attorney-general Sir Nicholas Lyell, prosecuting QC David Cocks is no longer head of his chambers at 18 Red Lion Court. He stepped down in July soon after his acquittal. Needless to say the two events were unrelated such is Cocks' immense popularity.

Equally unrelated is the fact that, strangely, the nominally most likely successor as head of chambers, Sir Derek Spencer, the former Tory solicitor-general, did not assume the post. Spencer was a key witness against Cocks as he had been involved in the misleading answers about the plea bargain discussions with Levitt given to then MP John Marshall. Spencer's role in the dissembling, designed to cover up fatal errors by Cocks and the SFO in handling the prosecution and then the plea bargain deal, did not win him many friends inside Red Lion Court. However, both Cocks and Spencer will continue their distinguished legal careers from the same chambers.

CANTOR FITZGERALD, one of the biggest bond traders in the City, is obviously a fun place to work. Ask Mark Anderson, who went to work for the American group in Los Angeles in 1994 but earlier this year sued for wrongful dismissal alleging that he had been the victim of a condoned campaign of homophobic abuse.

Among Anderson's colourful complaints are that his colleagues posted a fabricated montage of him on the office bulletin board purportedly simultaneously engaging in oral and anal sex in order to show his ability to provide "good service to our bisexual clients".

Another complaint is that a colleague with a great sense of humour placed a pink rubber vagina complete with pubic hair inside his sandwich. Also he claims a video was made and widely distributed internally within Cantor Fitzgerald showing Anderson's car painted to resemble a police car but containing such unlikely logos as "Rump Ranger" and instructions to dial "1-800-BUTT BOY".

Anderson says he was told he had to go last year because he would "not make a good stockbroker". Some in the City would hasten to disagree. Needless to say Anderson's claims are being fiercely resisted by Cantor Fitzgerald, which prides itself on "the skill, intelligence and drive of its employees". No doubt any similar laddish behaviour is not encouraged in the City office.

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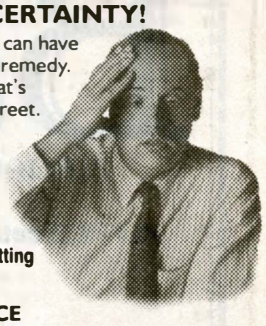

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